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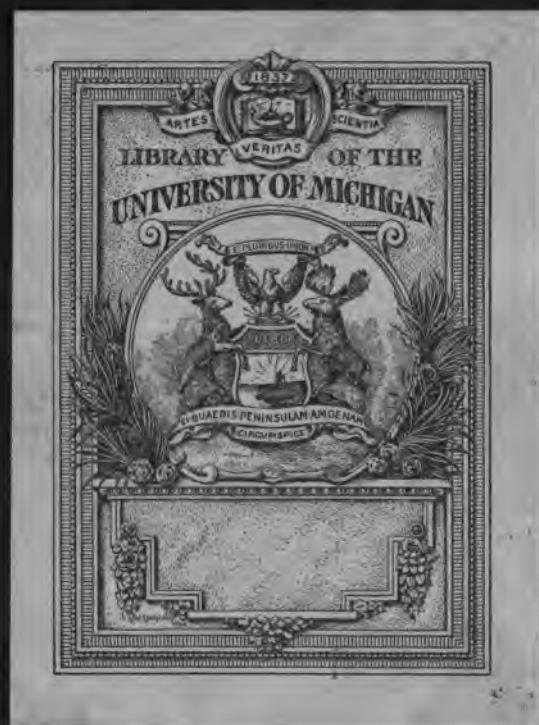
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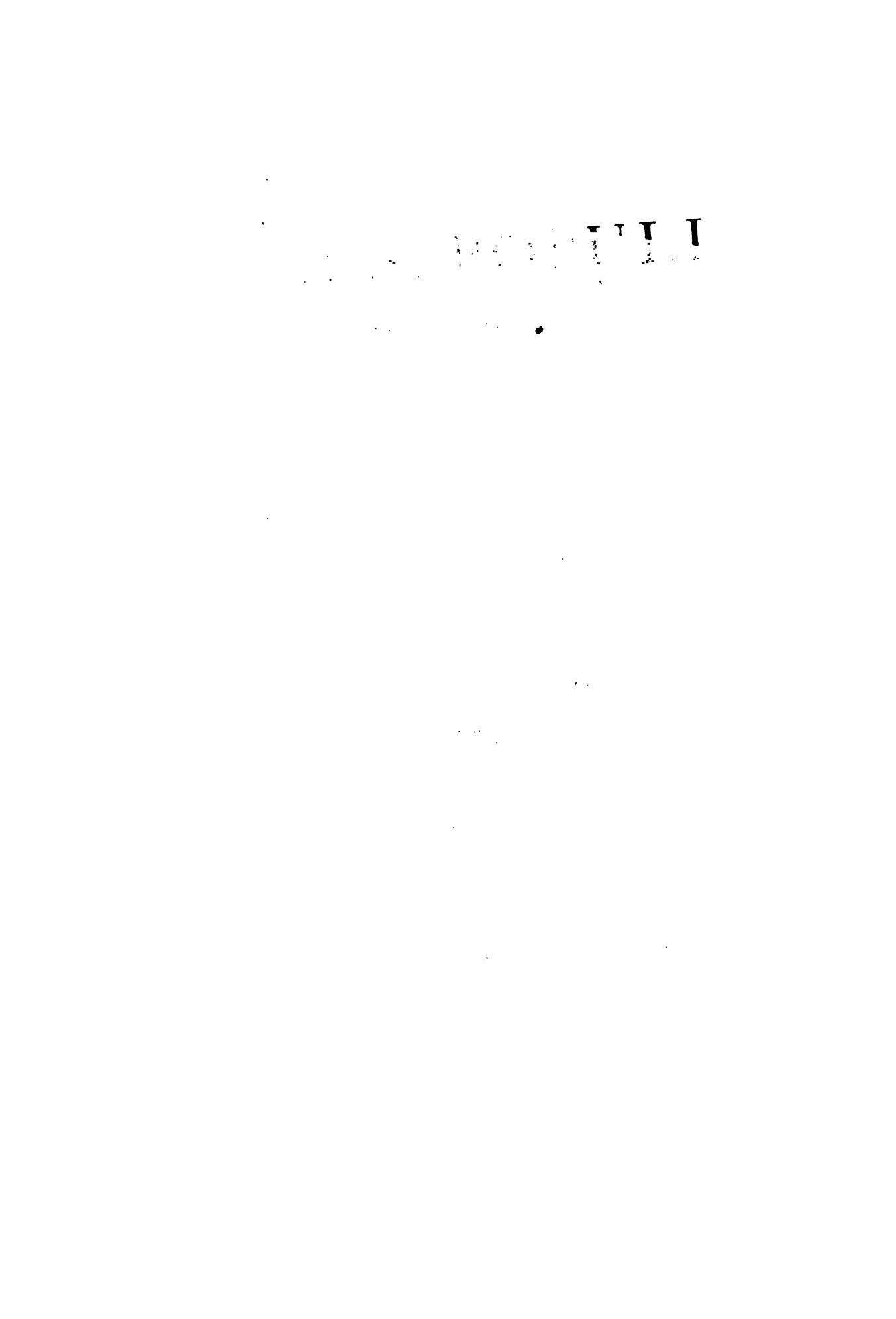
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VOCES POPULI





"MY DEAR CHILD, WHAT ON EARTH HAVE YOU GOT ON YOUR FEET?"





VOCES POPULI

[Reprinted from "Punch"] 78898

BY

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WITH TWENTY ILLUSTRATIONS

BY J. BERNARD PARTRIDGE

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TO
The Editor and Staff of "Punch"
THIS VOLUME
WHICH ORIGINALLY APPEARED UNDER
MR. PUNCH'S AUSPICES
IS
GRATEFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
BY THE AUTHOR.

AUGUST, 1890.

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VOCES POPULI

A Pastoral Play.

(*A Reminiscence of a Wet July.*)

ARGUMENT. Mr. and Mrs. BRONDESURY BROWN (of North Kensington), roused to emulation by certain recent open-air performances, have invited their friends to witness a selection from *The Tempest* in the garden of their villa, "Fontainebleau" (which derives its title from two remarkably fine plane-trees at one end of the lawn).

SCENE—*The Auditorium.* MR. and MRS. B. B. *discovered in readiness to receive their Guests.*

MRS. B. B. (*with a desperate cheerfulness*). Do you know, Brondesbury, dear, I really *do* believe we shall have fine weather, after all?

B. B. (*not a Pastoral Enthusiast*). I shouldn't be surprised if it did clear up—about midnight.

MRS. B. B. Well, if it doesn't rain any more till all the people are here, I shall be satisfied.

[*She says this with a dim notion of propitiating the Powers that be by her moderation.*

B. B. Why, you won't do it out here if it *rains*, will you?

MRS. B. B. (*with a deadly calm*). Where do you *suppose* we shall do it, then?

B. B. (*feebley*). Why not in the—ar—Drawing-room?

MRS. B. B. (*fanning herself*). Really, Brondesbury, you are too trying

for anything ! A Pastoral Play in the Drawing-room ! Have you *no* sense of the ridiculous ? Do you know what a Pastoral Play *is* ?

B. B. (*grimly*). I'm beginning to find out, my dear.

THE FIRST GUESTS *hopefully* (*as they make their way down the little cast-iron staircase to the lawn, which is roofed over with sail-cloth, and provided with rout-seats and chairs*). They can't possibly mean to have it this evening—we shall be able to get away all the sooner ! (*To their hostess*.) Oh, Mrs. Brown, *how unfortunate* ! such *hopeless* weather for it ! We really ought not to have come at all.

MRS. B. Oh, but indeed—we're not afraid of a few drops of rain—you sha'n't be disappointed ! (*General fall of jaws*.) We're going to begin as soon as ever a few more people come. You sha'n't go away without your *Tempest* !

[*Guests, realizing that they are in for one, at the very least, seat themselves with hypocritical expressions of delight.*

BEHIND THE CURTAIN : UNDER THE PLANE-TREES.

THE KING OF NAPLES (*to FERDINAND*). I say, old fellow, if we're to lie down and go to sleep here, we must have a little sawdust thrown down first. The ground's sopping !

FERDINAND (*also Stage Manager*). Oh, don't bother *me*, my dear fellow ! Where the dickens am *I* to find sawdust ?

THE K. of N. (*unkindly*). Thought you might have spared us some out of your calves !

MIRANDA. *I* have to go to sleep, too ; and that couch is simply soaked !

FERDINAND (*irritably*). Soaked ? Of course it's soaked ! It's Pastoral We must put up with it, that's all. My dear child, what on earth have you got on your feet ?

MIRANDA (*regarding her goloshes ruefully*). They're mother's. She made me promise to wear them if the ground was at all damp.

ARIEL (*to MAID, who has come round by the path*). Well, Tucker, what is it now ?

MAID. Your Aunt's love, Miss ; and she must insist on your putting on this.

ARIEL. What a shame ! (*To KING.*) I can't act Ariel in a waterproof, can I ?

THE K. of N. (*sardonically*). Oh, why not ? We must try and borrow an old sou-wester for Prospero, though, or he'll be out of the picture. (*Angrily, aside to FERDINAND*). Hang it all, we'd better do the whole thing under umbrellas at once !

CALIBAN (*to MIRANDA*). All I know is, I hope we shall begin soon. If I stand about in a damp hump much longer, I shall be ill. Just feel it.

[MIRANDA feels his hump delicately, and commiserates him.

PROSPERO. Never mind your hump—see if you can tell me how to make this confounded beard of mine stick on—the rain's washed off all the gum.

IN FRONT—BEFORE PLAY BEGINS.

MRS. HARLESDEN SMITH. Oh, I shall see splendidly here, thanks, dear Mrs. Brown ; *how* well you have arranged it all ! It's really not at all cold—well, if you *would* go and fetch my cloak, Harlesden, perhaps it *might* be more—

MISS LABROKE HILL (*to MR. KENSAL GREEN*). Such a charming idea, these garden theatricals. So different from a hot stuffy theatre !

MR. KENSAL GREEN (*putting up his coat-collar*). It certainly is the reverse of *stuff* here ! Plenty of air !

MIRANDA'S MOTHER. I do wish they would begin. I can't bear to think of my poor girl standing about on that nasty wet grass all this time—so bad for her !

ARIEL'S AUNT.—If I had guessed it would turn out such a night as this, I would never have allowed my niece to accept the part—and even as it *is*—

[*The curtain's drawn aside, and play begins : PROSPERO instructs MIRANDA concerning the family history in the midst of heavy downpour. One of ARIEL'S shoes comes off in the mud.*

MISS LABROKE HILL. How well they did the lightning then, didn't they ?

MR. K. G. Oh, it's all genuine—the Browns are determined to do the thing well. Thunder, too, you see ? There's nothing mean about Brown !

MIRANDA'S MOTHER. That dreadful lightning ! Oh, Mrs. Brown, do please tell them to come away from the trees—it is so dangerous !

CECIL'S AUNT. Oh, do ; they might be struck down at any moment—it's tempting Providence !

MRS. BROWN (*in despair*). It—it's only *sheet-lightning*. Please—*please* don't say anything about it to them now—it will only put them out. They're getting on so nicely !

ENTER CALIBAN (*on stage—moist, but maledictory*).

"As wicked dew as e'er my mother brushed

Drop on you both—a south-west blow on ye!"

PROSPERO (*with feeling*). "For this, be sure, to-night thou shalt have cramps !"

MR. K. G. (*sotto voce*). If CALIBAN don't have them, I shall !

ENTER TRINCULO (*on stage*). "If it should thunder as it did before, I know not where to hide my head. Yond same cloud cannot choose but fall by pailfuls. . . . Alas, the storm is come again !" &c., &c.

[Real thunder—rain descends pitilessly.

MR. K. G. Really a triumph of stage-management !

ENTER FERDINAND *on stage, bearing a log (he throws it down with a heavy splash)*. "There be some sports are painful."

MR. K. G. (*who has been sitting for some time with a stream of water from the roof trickling down the back of his neck*). Pastoral Plays, for example.

[Scene with MIRANDA is proceeding in pelting rain, which extinguishes most of the lamps which light the scene, when——

MIRANDA'S MOTHER (*rises*). I can't help it, Mrs. Brown—flesh and blood can't bear it. I can't sit here and see that poor child catching cold under my very eyes. Minnie, dear, come in under the tent out of the rain this instant ! Do you hear ? I order you !

[Sensation in audience—on the whole, hardly of disapproval.

MIRANDA. In a minute, Mamma. "I am a fool to weep at what I am glad of." (*To PROSPERO*). I really must go. It's no use, when Mamma once makes up her mind. [PROSPERO acquiesces sulkily.]

ARIEL'S AUNT. I was just about to say the same thing, dear Mrs. Sudbury! Pastorals or no pastorals, I can't let my sister's child commit suicide. Fanny, come too—and bring your waterproof.

FERDINAND (*helplessly*). But I say, how are we to get along without MIRANDA and ARIEL?

MIRANDA'S MOTHER. That I can't pretend to decide—but I should have thought you gentlemen could have finished it alone—somehow. Or I don't object to Minnie's acting, provided she keeps under the tent and speaks her part from there.

[ARIEL'S AUNT makes similar concession with regard to her niece.]

PROSPERO. No, I don't think that would do. (*To Mrs. BROWN*). Perhaps we *had* better stop for this evening—there doesn't seem to be much chance of the weather improving, and—(*candidly*)—I'm afraid it really *is* a little damp for the ladies,—eh; Brown?

MR. BROWN (*basely*). Well, if you ask me, I think we've all had about enough of it. [Mrs. B. conceals her mortification.]

GUESTS (*eagerly*). It's been too charming, too delightful—but we mustn't be selfish, must we? It would be cruel to expect them to do any more. And they *are* so wet, poor things!

[They adjourn with ill-disguised relief and profuse expressions of gratitude.]

IN THE DRAWING-ROOM—LATER.

MRS. BRONDESURY BROWN *is shedding a quiet tear by the chimneypiece*; MR. BRONDESURY BROWN *is humming, as he lights a candle with one of the programmes*.

MR. B. B. (*with offensive cheeriness*). Do you know, I shouldn't wonder if we had a fine day to-morrow—the glass is going up again.

MRS. B. B. (*in a muffled voice*). It may, if it likes.

MR. B. B. Come, come, Polly ! I'm sure everything went off very well—considering. I only hope none of the people will get rheumatism after it—that's all.

MRS. B. B. I dud-don't c-care if they all *die* !

Third Class—Parliamentary.

SCENE.—*Interior of Third Class Smoking Compartment.* FIRST PASSENGER, apparently a small Suburban Tradesman, of a full and comfortable habit, seated by window. To him enters a seedy but burly STRANGER, in a state of muzzy affability, with an under-suggestion of quarrelsomeness.

THE STRANGER (*leaning forward mysteriously*). Yer saw that gentleman I was a' torkin' to as I got in? Did yer know 'oo he was?

FIRST PASSENGER (*without hauteur, but with the air of a Person who sets a certain value on his conversation*). Well, he didn't look much like the Archbishop of Canterbury.

THE S. He's a better man than 'im! That was Brasher, the middling weight! he giv me the orfice straight about Killivan and Smifton, *he* did!

FIRST P. (*interested as a lover of the Noble Art of Self-Defence*). Ah! did he, though?

THE S. He *did*; I went up to him, and I sez, "Excuse me," I sez, like that, "but are you an American, or a German?"

FIRST P. (*with superiority*). He wouldn't like that—being taken for a German.

THE S. (*solemnly*). Those were my very words! And he sez, "No, I'm a Yank," and then I knoo 'oo he was, d'yee see? and so (*hazily*) one word brought up another, and we got a torkin'. If I was to tell you I'd *seen* Killivan, I should be tellin' yer a lie!

FIRST P. Well, I won't ask you to do that.

THE S. (*firmly*). Nor I wouldn't. But you've on'y to look at Smifton to see 'e's never 'ad a smack on the 'ed. Now, there's Sulton—'e's a *good*

man 'e is—'e is a good man ! Look 'ow that feller knocks 'issel about ! But if I was to pass *my* opinion it 'ud be this—Killivan's in it for science, he ain't in it to *take* anything ; you may take that from me !

FIRST P. (*objecting to be treated as an ingénue*). It's not the first time I've heard of it, by a long way.

THE S. Ah ! and it's the truth, the Bible truth (*putting his hand on the FIRST P.'S knee*). Now you b'leeve what I'm a'going to tell yer ?

FIRST P. (*his dignity a little ruffled*). I will—if it's anything in reason.

THE S. It's this : my opinion of Killivan and Sulton's this—Sulton brought Killivan out. I'm on'y tellin' yer from 'earsay, like ; but I know this myself—one lived in 'Oxton, and the other down Bermondsey way. 'E's got a nice little butcher's business there at this present moment ; and 'e's a mug if 'e turns it up !

FIRST P. (*axiomatically*). Every man's a mug if he turns a good business up.

THE S. Yer right ! And (*moralizing*) it ain't all 'oney with that sort o' people, neither, I can tell yer ! I dessay, now, when all's put to the test, you're not a moneyed man—no more than I am myself ?

FIRST P. (*not altogether flattered*). Well—that's as *may* be.

THE S. But I b'leeve yer to be a man o' the world, although I don't know yer.

FIRST P. (*modestly*). I used to be in it at one time.

THE S. (*confidentially*). I'm in it *now*. I don't get my livin' by it, though, mind yer. I'm a mechanic, I am—to a certain extent. I've been in America. *There's* a country now—they don't over-tax like they do 'ere !

FIRST P. (*sympathetically*). There you 'ave touched a point—we're taxed past all common sense. Why, this very tobacco I'm smoking is charged—

THE S. Talkin' of terbaccer, I don't mind 'aving a pipe along with yer myself.

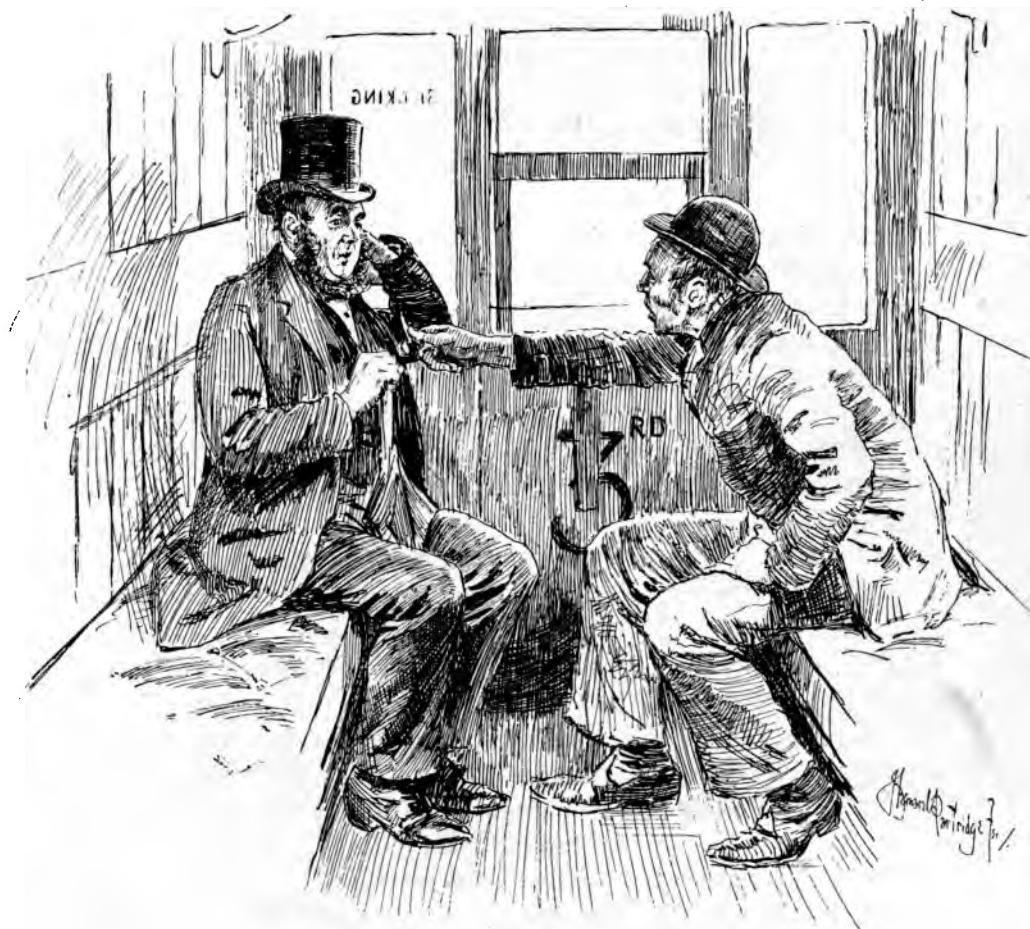
FIRST P. (*handing his pouch with a happy mixture of cordiality and condescension*). There you are, then.

THE S. (*afflicted by sudden compunction as he fills his pipe*). I 'ope I'm not takin' a libbaty in askin' yer ?

Third Class—Parliamentary.

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FIRST P. Liberty? rubbish! I'm not one to make distinctions where *I* go. I'd as soon talk to one man as I would another—you're setting your coat alight.



"YOU'RE A TOFF."

THE S. I set fire to myself once, and I never live in 'opes of doing so agen! It's a funny thing with me, I can smoke a cigar just as well as I

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could a short pipe. I'm no lover of a cigar, if you understand me; but I can go into company where they *are*, d'ye see?

FIRST P. (*shortly*). I see.

THE S. (*with fresh misgivings*). You'll excuse me if I've taken a libbaty with yer?

FIRST P. (*with a stately air*). We settled all that just now.

THE S (*after a scrutiny*). I tell yer what my idear of *you* is—that you're a *Toff*!

FIRST P. (*disclaiming this distinction a little uneasily*). No, no—there's nothing of the toff about *me*!

THE S. (*defiantly*). Well, you're a *gentleman*, anyway?

FIRST P. (*aphoristic, but uncomfortable*). We can all of us be that, so long as we behave ourselves.

THE S. (*much pleased by this sentiment*). Right agen! give us yer 'and—if it's not takin' a libbaty. I'm one of them as can't bear to take a libbaty with no matter 'oo. Yer know it's a real pleasure to me to be settin' 'ere torkin' comfortably to you, without no thought of either of us fallin' out. There's some people as wouldn't feel 'appy, not without they was 'aving a row. Now you and me ain't *like* that!

FIRST P. (*shifting about*). Quite so—quite so, of course!

THE S. Not but what if it was to come to a row between us, I could take *my* part!

FIRST P. (*wishing there was somebody else in the compartment*). I—I hope we'll keep off that.

THE S. (*devoutly*). So do I! I 'ope we'll keep off 'o that. But yer never know what may bring it on—and there it is, d'ye see! You and me might fall out without intending it. I've bin a bit of a boxer in my day. Do you doubt my word?—if so, say it to my face!

FIRST P. I've no wish to offend you, I'm sure!

THE S. I never take a lic straight from any man, and there you 'ave me in a word! If you're *bent* on a row, you'll find me a glutton, that's all I can tell you!

FIRST P. (*giving himself up for lost*). But I'm *not* bent on a row—qu—quite otherwise!

Third Class—Parliamentary.

II

THE S. You should ha' said so afore, because, when my back's once put up, I'm—'ello ! we're stopping, I get out 'ere, don't I ?

FIRST P. (*eagerly*). Yes—make haste, they don't stay long anywhere on this line !

THE S. (*completely mollified*). Then I'll say good-bye to yer. (*Tenderly*.) P'raps we may meet agen, some day.

FIRST P. We—we'll hope so—good day to you, wish you luck !

THE S. (*solemnly*). Lord love yer ! (*Pausing at door*.) I 'ope you don't think me the man to fall out with nobody. I never fall out—

[*Falls out into the arms of a Porter, whom he pummels as the train moves on, and FIRST PASSENGER settles into a corner with a sigh of relief.*

At a Dinner Party.

IN THE HALL.

GUEST discovered removing coat and hat, which are taken by a Man with a Reproving Eye, amidst a grieved silence.

BUTLER (*to Subordinates, in ghostly whisper*). Tell 'em they can send up as soon as they please—now.

THE GUEST (*to himself, on the stairs*). I am the last man then? Kept them all waiting, too, I shouldn't wonder . . . I don't care—they shouldn't ask a man to dine out the very evening he's been—(*catching sight of himself in the mirror*). Jove! I mustn't go in looking like that, though—or they'll see what's the matter. [Assumes a jaunty smile.]

IN THE DRAWING-ROOM.

CHORUS OF STARVING GUESTS (*in undertone*). Too bad, you know—can't understand it! . . . No one has any right to do this sort of thing—don't care who he is! . . . Generally so punctual here . . . I make it a rule—never wait over five minutes past the hour for any one . . . Quite right too, &c., &c.

BUTLER. Mr. St. John Brentwing.

[Enter last GUEST under concentrated glare from surrounding eyes, which he seems rather to enjoy than otherwise.]

HOSTESS (*with implied reproach*). I began to be quite afraid something had happened to you.

[MR. B. thinks that she is not far wrong, and mumbles apologies.]

BUTLER (*re-appearing after a moment's pause outside the door*). Dinner is served.

HOSTESS (*to MR. B.*). Let me see—do you know Miss Flambowe?

MR. B. (*who has been rejected by the young lady in question that very afternoon*). I—ah—do know Miss Flambowe.

[*Adds—“at last!” to himself bitterly and feels better.*

HOSTESS. Then I want you to take her in, please. You won't mind being close to the fire?

[*MR. B. thinks he has been very close to the fire already.*

A PATERNAL OLD GENTLEMAN. A most charming young lady—I congratulate you, Sir,—char-ming!

MR. B. (*advancing to MISS FLAMBOWE with elaborate indifference*). I believe I'm to take you in.

MISS F. (*looking down, and hoping he doesn't mean to be “silly”*). I believe you are.

ON THE STAIRS.

MR. B. (*thinking he'd better say something*). Have you been out at all to-day?

MISS F. Only in the morning—such a wretched day, hasn't it been?

[*Wishes she'd said something else.*

MR. B. Has it? Well, it *was* rather a dismal afternoon, now I come to think of it.

MISS F. (*deciding to take this literally*). Oh, very—but, after all, one must expect a little unpleasantness just at this time of the year, mustn't one?

MR. B. Oh, yes—you can get used to anything if you only make up your mind to it.

[*Thinks he is carrying it off rather well.*

AT THE DINNER-TABLE.

MISS F. How prettily the table's arranged, isn't it?—though I never quite like to see flowers strewn carelessly about, do you? I mean, it seems such a pity, you know.



"I BELIEVE I'M TO TAKE YOU IN."

MR. B. (*with a feeble attempt to be cynical*). Oh, I don't suppose *they* mind much, after they're once plucked—sooner they get the end over, the

better for them, I should think. (*Is afraid he has gone too far.*) Aren't you taking turbot? you should—it's capital!

[*Swallows some mouthfuls with an effort.*

MISS F. I'm glad you're enjoying it. [*She crumbles her bread.*

MR. B. I had no luncheon this morning, you see—and so—(*lays down his knife and fork*) that gives a fellow an *appetite*, you know. (*To Footman, who says, "Sherry or 'Ock, Sir?"*) Rock.

MISS F. (*to herself*). I don't believe he minds a *bit*—and yet he hasn't finished his fish, after all!

MR. B. (*in answer to his other neighbour*). Well, no, there isn't much doing just now. I've been meaning to get away for a long time—go abroad and rough it a bit, don't you know. (*He has raised his voice unconsciously for the benefit of MISS F.*) Start next week at the latest, I hope.

MISS F. (*absently, to her other neighbour, who is telling her a funny story about Sydney Smith*). How *very* interesting—and you saw that yourself! [*The neighbour puts her down mentally as a pretty idiot.*

MISS F. (*to MR. B.*). Did I hear you say you were going abroad just now—where did you think of going?

MR. B. (*who has only just thought of it*). Well, I shall run over to the Rockies and shoot grizzlies.

MISS F. Do you think you could lower that candle-shade a little? Thanks. Shoot grizzlies? You will *like* that, won't you?

MR. B. Immensely. (*To Footman.*) Champagne, please.

MISS F. I suppose you have friends out there?

MR. B. I had a friend who went out some time ago.

MISS F. And you are going to join him?

MR. B. (*carelessly*). Shouldn't be surprised if I did—sooner or later.

MISS F. Is he settled out there, then?

MR. B. Settled? oh, yes—he's settled.

MISS F. And he likes the country?

MR. B. He wasn't there long enough to tell—fell down a cliff, or something, and was killed, out shooting, poor chap!

MISS F. (*after playing with an entrée*). I hope you'll be careful.

MR. B. I? oh, *I* shall be careful enough—one takes one's chance, you know. By the way, will you let me send you home a skin, if I have any luck with the grizzlies? . . . you'd rather I didn't? I suppose I oughtn't to have offered—I never know about these things—I must wait, then—till—till I hear news of you . . . were you looking for something?

MISS F. Only a little water, please.

OVER THE CIGARETTES.

HOST (*to Mr. B.*). And how did you get on with that Miss Flambowe, eh, Brentwing? Nice girl, isn't she?

MR. B. Very.

[Helps himself to salted almonds—which he doesn't like.]

HOST (*confidentially*). Now that's a girl now—a young fellow like you . . . chance for you . . . might do worse, eh?

MR. B. (*taking a cigarette and wishing his hand wouldn't shake so confoundedly*). Well, you see, Sir—as to that—(*laughs awkwardly*) well, there are two sides to every question, aren't there?

HOST. I tell you what, Brentwing, you young men are too selfish nowadays—you don't like to give up your clubs, and your chambers and all your bachelor enjoyments,—not if it's to marry the nicest girl in the world—that's what it is!

MR. B. (*laughing again unsteadily*). That's about the truth of it, Sir,—we're a poor lot!

UPSTAIRS.

THE HOSTESS (*to Miss F.*). And so you have met your neighbour before? He's quite a favourite of mine—only he shouldn't come so late to dinner. I hope you found him amusing?

MISS F. Oh, extremely—he's going out to America, he says, to—to shoot bears, or something.

HOSTESS. He never said a word about it to me. What can he want to rush off like that for?

At a Dinner Party.

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MISS F. He didn't tell me that.

[*She watches the door under her eyelashes, as the men enter; MR. BRENTWING engages in an animated conversation with a lively young lady at the other end of the room. THE PATERNAL OLD GENTLEMAN comes up and entertains MISS FLAMBOWE with elderly attentions for the rest of the evening, which she appears to appreciate highly.*

IN THE HALL.

MR. B. (*who by the merest accident has taken his leave the moment after* MISS F.). Are they getting you a cab?

[*Coldly, to MISS F. whom he finds below.*

MISS F. It's outside—I'm only waiting for my maid. Good-night—or I suppose I ought to say—Good-bye?

MR. B. (*stiffly*). After this afternoon, I should imagine good-bye was the only thing *to* say.

MISS F. And you couldn't manage to come and see me just once—before you go away to your bears? [Turns aside to arrange her hood.

MR. B. I could, of course,—only I don't exactly see what the *good* of it would be!

MISS F. Of course you are the best judge of that—I only thought you might find it worth while perhaps.

MR. B. Lucella! Do you mean . . . ?

MISS F. (*as she gets into cab*). I mean that I don't always quite know what I *do* mean. Good-night.

MR. B. (*soliloquising on pavement*). If I *do* go, she'll only make a fool of me again. . . . I won't give her the chance. . . . At least, I'll think over it.

[*Walks home, and thinks over it.*

An East-End Poultry Show.

SCENE—*The People's Palace; in Building set apart for Poultry, Pigeon, and Rabbit Show. Stream of Visitors inspecting animals in zinc and wire pens.*

AMANDUS MILENDIUS (*to AMANDA MILENDIA: coming to a halt before cage containing "roopy"-looking fowl, with appearance of having been sent out on a pair of legs several sizes too tall for it*). They've 'ighly commended 'im, yer see.

AMANDA M. (*who does not converse with facility*). Um!

[*Looks at bird without seeing it.*

AMANDUS. Yes, they must ha' thought 'ighly of 'im before they'd commend him like that, yer know!

AMANDA (*wishing she was readier of response*). Ah! (*The fowl winks slowly at her with his lower eyelid.*) Come away—I don't like him!

[*They move on.*

THE EXHIBITOR (*coming up and inspecting the bird with pride*). 'Ere—Joe! (*Fowl shuts both eyes with a bored expression*). B'longs to me—that bird, Sir! (*To Bystander.*)

VISITOR (*from the West; anxious to be agreeable*). Ha, a fine bird—magnificent!

EXHIBITOR. Bred 'im myself, Sir—he's a bit sleepy just now. (*Apologetically.*) Wake up, ole chap! (*Fowl half opens one eye, and closes it immediately on perceiving proprietor.*) Knows me, yer see!

VISITOR (*with fatal rashness*). A—a Brahma, isn't he?

[*Wonders what made him say that, and tries to think what Brahmases are like—when they are not locks.*

EXHIBITOR (*in tone of pitying reproach*). No, Sir—no.—Black Red Bantum, Sir!

VISITOR (*wishing he had remained vague*). Oh—ah, just so—good evening.

A COCK (*derisively*). Crorky—rorky—roo !

AT THE RABBIT PENS.

ANOTHER EXHIBITOR (*accompanied by Friend with Catalogue*). I ain't come across *my* Buck yet. He took a prize, I heerd. (*Stops at Cage*.) Ah, *this* looks like him . . . Third prize, yer see—not so bad, eh? [Chuckles.]

THE FRIEND. Hold on a bit! (*Refers to Catalogue*.) "Number seven 'underd and two. Parton. Buck. Eight months." Your name ain't Parton.

EXHIB. Then it's mine in the next. *Second Prize!* Better'n Third, that, ain't it?

THE FRIEND. They've got *that* down as Parton's too.

EXHIB. Well, I *thought* some'ow as—*this* is him anyway. Look'ere! *First Prize!* And deserves it, though I sez it myself!

FRIEND (*not without a certain satisfaction*). No—no, you're wrong again. I'll show you where *you* are. See. "Seven 'underd and five. W. Cropper. Buck. Ten months." *That's* you!

EXHIB. (*incredulously*). That? that ain't never *my* cream buck! (*The rabbit remains wrapt in meditation*.) I'll soon show yer. (*Blows in rabbit's face*. *Mutual recognition. Tableau*). It *is* my buck! and only 'ighly commended! (*Recovering himself*.) Well, I arsk you if he oughtn't to ha' done the other—him as they've given the First Prize to? Why, there ain't no comparison between them two rabbits!

THE COCK (*encouragingly*). Crorky—rorky—roo !

THE FRIEND (*losing all further interest*). Well, it's all chance like. Let's go and 'ave a look at them Lops.

Crowd of Admirers around pen containing gigantic gander.

FIRST ADMIRER. That's Wilkinses' gander, that is.

SECOND ADMIRER. A fine-grown bird, I *will* say.

[*Handsomely, as if he would hardly have expected such a person as Wilkins to produce anything as good as that.*

THIRD ADMIRER. Monster, ain't he? Why, yer might *ride* on him!

SMALL CHILD (*pointing delightedly at the Gander*). 'Ook, Mozzer, pitty duck!

FOND PARENT (*admiringly*). I declare it's wonderful how quick he gets the names—it *is* a fine duck!

THE COCK (*with a touch of correction*). Crorky-rorky-roo!

A CONNOISSEUR (*inspecting pigeon*). Now, there's a nice pigeon—that *is* a nice pigeon; but I tell yer what it is—he ain't got the space to do hisself justice in there. Give him a bigger pen, and a brick to stand on, and you'd soon see the difference!

FELLOW CONN. They ought to ha' give him more room to show off his tail in—else what's the good of a bird *'aving* a tail, come to that?

FIRST CONN. (*sententiously*). Ah, you've 'it it.

COMPETITOR (*apparently unsuccessful*). I say (*with bitter sarcasm*) 'Ave yer seen the pair as take a Fust? Birds I wouldn't pick up if I found 'em in the street—no, *that* I wouldn't! Fust Prize to them—hor-hor! Well, the world's comin' to a pretty pass, I must say! Arter *that*!—

[*Eloquent apophysis.*

AMANDUS (*tolerantly, to Amanda*). Well, pidgings *are* pretty much alike, unless you've been brought up to know the differences. I 'ad a Uncle a breeder.

AMANDA (*feeling that her ignorance is no longer a discredit*). Then o' course *you'd* know! [They go out arm-in-arm, silent but sympathetic.

Picture Sunday.

SCENE—*The Studio of that versatile and ambitious young Painter, DAUBENEY STIPPELL; usual accessories; three completed pictures on effectively draped easels. STIPPELL discovered receiving Sunday visitors, and trying to conceal his utter unconsciousness of ever having seen any of them before in his whole life.*

MODEL (*at the door*). Mrs. Jopper . . . Mr. Bopper . . . Colonel and Mrs. Cropper . . . Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Flopper . . . Mr. 'Amilton 'Opper!

STIPPELL (*mechanically to each*). How are you? so kind of you to come—you'll—(*with a nervous laugh*)—find a picture or two over there.

[*The Visitors drift vaguely about, shying nervously at the canvases, and examining the tapestry and mirrors, or anything else by preference.*

MODEL. Mrs. Ardleigh Le Stilton . . . Mrs. and Miss Rosebery Rasch . . . Mrs. Goldingham Pinchbeck!

STIPPELL (*overjoyed to find he knows somebody*). Mrs. Pinchbeck! how charming of you to find time to look in—I really am delighted!

MRS. PINCHBECK. I found I could just manage to squeeze you in—so many places one must go to, don't you know!

STIP. (*guiltily; like a small boy who has just smashed a window*). Will you—a—let me show you what I've been doing? This is my Academy picture. I think you'll get a better light if you stand a little farther off.

[*As she is apparently proceeding to rub noses with the principal figures on the canvas.*

MRS. P. (*retiring*). Ah, that is better—*much* better. (*Perceives that the subject is classical, and decides that she must be careful not to commit herself.*) Yes! (*Draws in her breath reverently.*) I couldn't have believed it was possible to realise such a situation as that—and yet one *feels* that it must have been just *so*!

STIP. (*highly gratified*). You *do* think it tells its own story then?

MRS. P. (*telling her own*). Oh, yes—indeed I do! You can't *help* seeing it!

[*Propitiates her conscience by the reflection that she means the picture which, being 10 ft. by 8, is indeed distinctly visible.*

A crowd gradually collects around the principal canvas in awed silence, each person prudently waiting to discover what it is intended to represent before risking a remark.

MRS. P. (*rendered bolder by success*). I don't think I *ever* quite felt before *how* splendid Ancient Rome must have been!

STIP. Ah—exactly, yes—but—(*considerately*) Sicily was not a Roman Province at the time Balaustion came to Syracuse.

MRS. P. (*plunging more wildly, aided by desperate recollections of a course of lectures on Grecian Colonisation*). Oh, no, of course—that was later—let me see, wasn't Balaustion one of the early Tyrants?

STIP. (*in resigned disgust*). You must really excuse me from offering any opinion.

[*The bystanders are much impressed, and MRS. P., immensely pleased by her erudition, takes her leave.*

MODEL. Mr. Mordaunt Hundertone . . . Mrs. Olio Margreen, and friends.

ENTER MRS. MARGREEN with a little run, two friends following reluctantly in her train. She falls into a pose of rapt adoration before the principal canvas.

MRS. MARGREEN. Oh, Mr. Stippell! how *could* you? What *am* I to say? What a picture!

MR. UNDERTONE (*from behind*). Ah, she's right *there!* what a picture!

MRS. MAR. I mustn't look. I positively must *not*! I'm blinded,



"WHAT A PICTURE!"

dazzled—it makes me want to hide my eyes. (*Sympathetic murmur from Und.*) Why, when it's hung it will kill everything *near* it!

UND. (*aside to FAIR NEIGHBOUR*). At all events, it's done nothing to deserve hanging *yet*! It won't be hung till it's cut down ; and, if it's cut down, it'll be cut up ! regular mad Irish bull of a picture, that!

FAIR NEIGHBOUR (*who hasn't an idea what he means*). Oh, Mr. Undertone, don't—you're too killing !

MRS. MAR. (*bringing up her friends*). Oh ! but I mustn't forget—I want to present Mr. Dummer (*in a whisper to S.*), the Dummer, you know ! (*S. bows, and tries to look as if this description conveyed some definite idea to his mind* ; MR. D. *jerks and mumbles*). MRS. PLUMMER ! (MRS. P. performs a reverential curtsey, as if she was in the presence of a resuscitated Old Master at the very least). Now (*with much tact*), do tell them the story of the picture in *your own words* ! (*As if she wouldn't spoil it by telling it herself*).

STIP. (*who begins to see that it may be as well*). Well, it's from Browning, you know—"Balaustion reciting the *Alkestis* of Euripides to the Syracusans on the steps of the Temple of Herakles."

[Universal chorus of pleased recognition.]

MRS. FLOPPER (*enthusiastically*). That dear Browning—so like him ! I do love recitations. Have you ever heard "Ostler Joe" ?

COLONEL CROPPER (*to MRS. MARGREEN, in a cautious whisper*). Might I ask—I didn't quite catch—what is the subject supposed to be ?

MRS. MAR. (*who has a good ear, but a short memory*). Oh, don't you know? It's (*desperately*) "Euripides inciting the Syracusans to discover a lost tune under the steps of the Temple of 'All-kissed-us.'" You remember now?

COL. C. Yes, yes—to be sure ; astonishing how one forgets these things —so he did !

MRS. ROSEBERY RASCH (*to her daughter*). What is it all about, FLORIDA ?

MISS R. R. I'm not quite sure, mother ; but I think it's Euripides with his lyre, accusing somebody of exciting the Heraclese by a lost tune—out of Browning.

MRS. R. R. (*satisfied*). Oh! "*The Lost Chord!*" Ah, yes, I see. I'd forgotten that was his.

MR. BOPPER (*advancing pompously to STIPPELL*). Do you know, my dear Sir, that that's a very remarkable picture—it—ah—reminds me of an anecdote I once—

STIP. (*evading him blandly*). Indeed? Then my work has not been altogether wasted.

MRS. JOPPER (*after gazing long at the canvas, to S. in a deep solemn voice*). Allow me to ask—do you—er—take your own perspectives?

STIP. (*gasping, and then recovering his presence of mind*). Generally, dear lady—wherever I can come across them.

MRS. JOPP. (*profoundly*). Quite right. It is the only way to succeed!

[S. retreats, deeply mystified.]

STIP. (*to MRS. MAR*). Oh, are you looking at *that*? that's in a quieter style, you see. Child nursing a sick monkey.

MRS. MAR. Do you know—though, of course, the other picture, the—the "*Syripidans*," is one of the finest I ever saw; I think this is more striking, somehow! how sick that monkey looks! and the child, too—de-licious!

STIP. So glad you like it; just an idea of mine (*disparagingly*), an idea! I'm a little doubtful what to call it—must have a good name for it. Can you suggest a title for me?

UND. (*as before*). Ahem, give a bad picture a good name, and they may hang it!

MRS. MAR. (*to S., impulsively*). Oh! yes! Call it—well (*with a brilliant inspiration*), how would "*The Sick Monkey*" do?

STIP. Charming—admirable! but—just a trifle too subtle, eh?

UND. Why not "*A Pair of 'Em*"?

MRS. MAR. (*brightly*). No. I know—"Monkey and Child;" sounds quite "Old Mastery."

UND. (*sotto voce*). Won't get beyond sounding; better label each, to prevent confusion.

MRS. MAR. Well, I must tear myself away, Mr. Stippell. I can't tell you how you've stimulated me!

STIP. Not at all. Have you had any coffee ?

MRS. MAR. Thanks—not any ; good-bye, good-bye ! And I'm sure if those naughty, unkind Bishops would only come and see *your* pictures, they would understand how far "Show-Sunday" is from mere pleasure-seeking !

UND. They would indeed ! (*Aloud to S.*). Good-bye, Stippell, old fellow ; you're going to astonish us all *this* time, that's plain.

OUTSIDE.

CONFUSED CHORUS of *Departing Visitors*. Did you *ever* see such dreadful things ? What a *pity* it is, isn't it ?

MRS. MAR. (*to friend*). I assure you, my dear, I never found so much difficulty in saying anything at all *decently* civil about a picture in my life—really *too* shocking—they can't get in ! Now, where shall we go next ? It will be quite refreshing to see a *picture* again !

A Show Place.

SCENE—*A Ducal Castle. Party of Tourists discovered waiting in the Entrance Hall. Enter the HEAD BUTLER, an imposing person with sandy hair and pale blue prominent eyes.*

THE H. B. (*with condescension*). If you'll 'ave the goodness to wait a little, I shall be able to go round with you myself.

[*Departs with mysterious solemnity, leaving the party overwhelmed.*

A MATRON (*who yields to none in reverence for the aristocracy—to her daughters*). Doesn't everything look stately, dears? I wonder where they keep all the hats and umbrellas.

A WIFE (*to her husband*). Now, for goodness' sake, Charles, don't try to be funny here—remember *where you are!*

[*The Party converse in whispers; a Tourist in a Flannel Shirt taps a man in armour familiarly on the stomach, causing him to emit a hollow ring. The rest look at him reproachfully. He returns their gaze with defiance, but edges away from the armed figure as the Butler returns.*

THE H. B. Now, please, if you'll follow me, and keep together. (*Tourists straggle after him, each in deadly fear of catching his eye; the Man in the Flannel Shirt hums the "Marseillaise" under his breath.*) The Banqueting 'All. The Fam'ly takes all their meals 'ere when at Blaisenings. (*Party repeat this to one another in hushed voices.*) The tapestry along the walls is Gobling.

CHARLES (*frivolously*). Ha, very bad example for the family!

THE H. B. Did you speak, Sir?

CHARLES (*turning red in the face*). Only to my wife.

TOURIST (*with a taste for Architecture and a desire to air his information*). Er—this portion of the building is—ah—Early Decorated, is it not?



THE MAN IN THE FLANNEL SHIRT.

THE H. B. (*severely*). No, Sir. Decorated quite lately, by a London Firm.

[*The Architectural Tourist falls to the rear; the others conceive a poor opinion of him.*

A TOURIST (*nerving himself to ask a question*). Will there be many dining here this evening?

THE H. B. (*with a lofty candour*). Well, no—we 'aven't many staying



"THE TAPESTRY ALONG THE WALLS IS GOBLING."

with us at present. I should say we shouldn't set down more than twenty or so to-night—or thirty, at most.

A TOURIST WITH A TWANG. Air your Company a Stag-party?

THE H. B. (*pityingly*). There's no deer-forests in this part of the country.

THE TOURIST WITH A TWANG (*clapping him on the shoulder and laughing*). I see you don't understand our National Colloquialisms.

THE H. B. I don't understand any Colloquialisms bein' took with Me. (*He moves away with dignity*). This (*opening door*) is the Hamber Droring Room.

[*A door on the opposite side is seen to shut precipitately as the Party enter.*

THE REVERENTIAL MATRON. Gwendolen—come over here a minute. (*IWhispers.*) She was sitting in this very chair—do you see? I wonder if it could have been the Duchess! That's the mark left in her book—if I only dared. (*Reading title.*) *The Mystery of a Bathing Machine.* We'll get it at the bookstall as we go back.

THE H. B. (*coming to a stand and fixing his eye on a Nervous Tourist, who opens his mouth feebly*). The pair of Vawses on the Consols was brought over by the Grandfather of the present Duke of 'Ammercloth, and are valued at hover five thousand pounds apiece. We 'ave been hoffered nine thousand five 'undred for the pair—and refused.

[*The Man in the Flannel Shirt groans "Ow long?" to himself in bitter indignation at the unequal distribution of wealth.*

THE NERVOUS TOURIST. Did you, though?

[*Regards the H. B. with intense admiration for his judgment and resolution.*

A COMIC TOURIST. I wish some one 'ud offer me nine thousand pounds for the vawses on my mantelpiece. I wouldn't 'aggle over it.

THE H. B. (*ignoring him*). The picture in the panel above the chimlcy-piece is a paregoric subject representing Apoller, Mercry, and the Fine Arts complimenting the first Duke of 'Ammercloth on the completion of the new Private Chapel. By 'Ogarth. In the corner. Old woman heatin' a nerring. By Torchlight.

A TOURIST (*who thinks it is time he made a remark*). Let me see—wasn't he one of the Dutch School? Tautschlyt. Torschlyt. I seem to know the name.

THE H. B. (*tolerantly*). No, no, Sir—you didn't foller what I said. It wasn't the name of the artis—it's what the old woman is heatin' the 'erring by, in a cellar. The cellar and the 'erring is considered masterpieces.

A YOUNG LADY. What a very curious method of cooking fish, isn't it?

[*The Party move on.*

H. B. This is his Grace's own Study. His Grace sees his tenants at that table. [General interest in the table, except on part of the Man in the Flannel Shirt, who suppresses a snort.

CHARLES'S WIFE. Fancy, Charles—the Duke uses "J" pens!

CHARLES. Not even gilded! This is a severe blow, Caroline!

[*Pretends to be overcome.*

HIS WIFE. If you go on in this foolish manner, I will not be seen talking to you.

THE REVERENTIAL MATRON (*in a whisper*). Ermyntrude, see if you can manage to pick up a nib when no one's looking—there are plenty lying about.

A TOURIST (*anxious to propitiate the Butler*). An excellent landlord, the Duke, I believe?

THE H. B. (*coldly*). We 'ave not 'eard of any complaints on the estate. (*Leads the way to the Gallery.*) The Hoak Gallery—formerly the Harmry. When we 'ave a large 'ouse party, they sometimes comes up 'ere after dinner, and 'as games.

[*Expressions of pleased surprise—always excepting the Man in the Flannel Shirt, who mutters something about "dancing on volcanoes."*

A TOURIST (*with a thirst for information*). What sort of games?

THE H. B. (*with dignity*). That I can't tell you percisely, bein' no part of my dooties to participate. (*Halting before a picture.*) Portrait of 'Enry Halgernon, Second Marquis of Seasprings, beyeaded on Tower 'Ill by Sir Peter Lely.

CHARLES THE INCORRIGIBLE. Do you mean to say that Sir Peter took his head off?

THE H. B. (*solemnly*) He took his Lordship off full length, Sir, as you can see by looking. (*To the REVERENTIAL MATRON, whose demeanour has not*

escaped him.) If you like to stop be'ind, and let the rest go on a bit, I can show you something that's not generally open to the public. (*Mysteriously.*) It's the room where all his Grace's boots are kep'. He has over a hundred pair of them.

[*The MATRON rejoins the rest in a state of solemn ecstasy, and can hardly refrain from betraying how highly she has been privileged.*

The Party return to the Hall.

A TOURIST (*a diligent student of the Society paragraphs in a Sunday paper —to BUTLER*). Is Lady Floriline at home just now?

THE H. B. Her Ladyship is away visiting at present, Sir. Expected back Saturday week, Sir.

THE SOCIETY T. (*as if he felt this as a personal disappointment*). Not till Saturday week?—really!—ah! (*The rest regard him with increased respect, and listen attentively.*) I suppose it's quite true that the match with Lord George Gingham is broken off. Going to marry Lady Susan Sunshade, isn't he? I was very sorry when I heard of it (*feelingly*).

THE H. B. Was you hintimate with 'is Lordship, Sir?

THE S. T. (*with a modest reserve*). Oh, I've stayed with him, you know, and that sort of thing.

[*He has—at a Swiss Hotel, when Lord George took him for a tout, —but what of that?*

THE H. B. Then I should certingly recommend you to inquire of Lord George in pusson, Sir. That's his Lordship coming up the terrace now.

[*The S. T. collapses utterly.*

ERMYNTRUDE (*coming up to her Mother*). Oh, Mamma, what do you think? We looked in at a window as we passed, and we saw them all having afternoon tea. And the Duchess was actually eating buttered toast. She didn't see us for ever so long—we had such a good view!

[*Scene closes in upon the majority of the Party, anxiously discussing in undertones the propriety or otherwise of offering any, and what, fee to the Butler, who stands apart in a brown study, with a distinct effort to mitigate the severity of his expression. As far as the Man in the Flannel Shirt is concerned, the problem "solvitur ambulando."*

At a Turkish Bath.

SCENE—*The Middle Room of a Turkish Bath. Subdued light. On benches, and in folding-chairs, Bathers are vaguely seen extended in various stages of limpness. The usual Turkish BATHING BORE is heard discoursing to any one he can induce to listen. In a remote corner is a SOMNOLENT BATHER who knows him, but trusts, by lying low, to evade recognition.*

THE B. B. Yes—(*more thoughtfully*)—y—yes. Extraordinary the freedom with which my pores act! I assure you, I'm not here one minute before— [Proceeds to describe result in detail.]

[ENTER an ELDERLY NEOPHYTE; *he feels shy and strange, it being his first appearance, and, owing to the gloom, and his own shortsightedness, seats himself upon the SOMNOLENT BATHER'S legs.*

THE S. B. (*roused*). Conf—Really, Sir, I think you'll be more comfortable somewhere else!

THE B. B. Why, bless my soul, I ought to know that voice—it is Dormer! To think of our being in the same room all this while, and never suspecting it! Wish I'd known before—makes it so much less tedious, meeting with some one you know, eh?

S. B. (*yawning*). Exactly—oh, very much so.

[Crosses hands behind head, and closes eyes.]

B. B. Difficulty is to recognise fellows here, y'know.

S. B. (*to himself*). Can't button-hole 'em at any rate! (To the B. B.) You seem to manage it!

B. B. Oh, I knew your voice in a minute—"That's Dormer's voice,

I'll lay a hundred-pound note!" I thought. The wonder is, you didn't recognise *mine*—I've been talking all the time, more or less.

S. B. (*guardedly*). *Have you, though? It is odd, as you say.*

B. B. I've often found that some people's ears have an astonishing lack of delicate perception. For instance, there's a very dear and old friend of mine—you may know him—

[*Tells him a long history about his Friend's aural deficiencies. In the meantime the ELDERLY NEOPHYTE has established himself, in some trepidation, on a bench, with his head resting on a little wooden block, which he tries hard to think comfortable. He has a dry roof to his mouth, a tickling nose, and a general sensation of singeing. As the BORE's voice ceases, a silence falls, which the E. N. finds depressing. A Stout Gentleman observes "Phew!" occasionally. A clock ticks, and water drips in the distance. A head close to the E. N.'s sighs in a heart-broken manner, and a RESTLESS BATHER rises, and begins to prowl up and down like a caged wolf.*

ENTER an Attendant with pewter cups of water; the E. N. drains one greedily, like a shipwrecked mariner, and then has another.

THE B. B. (*for the general benefit*). Never drink when I'm in the bath. Rinse the mouth out, yes; but drink? no. I had an old aunt—

[*Relates a fearful story of the effect of cold water taken internally upon an old aunt—the E. N. begins to be alarmed.*

THE B. B. (*taking advantage of another silence*). 'Nother thing man ought to be *most* careful about, and that is—never take Turkish Bath 'cept under medical advice. Now when I went to my medical man—(*describes interview at length*. *The E. N. reflects, with terror, that he has omitted to consult his Doctor*). Dormer, my dear fellow, you're getting drowsy—very dangerous practice that, slightest thing the matter with your heart, and phit—it's all over with you! Why, I knew a man once—(*gives an account of a man who nearly died, which decides the E. N., who has been just dropping off, to keep awake at all hazards.*) You can always tell if it agrees with you—if you've any singing in the ears, or dizziness, or labouring of breath, or

faintness, anything of that sort—well, the sooner you're out, the better—that's all !

E. N. *My symptoms!* (*Thinks he would be shampooed at once, if he was a little more sure what it was like ; decides to let some one else be operated on first.*)

SHAMPOOER (*drawing curtain at arch, with a certain grimness*). Ready for two gentlemen now.

[*Two Bathers rise, with the air of "ci-devants" summoned to the Conciergerie, and pass between the curtains* ; E. N. listens anxiously for what can be heard.]

FIRST SHAMPOOER (*apparently an austere character*). On that slab, Sir, if you please ! Lay right down.

THE SUBJECT (*of a chatty disposition*). Eh ? oh, yes, I see ; to be sure, yes, yes. (*A dull hissing is heard.*)

THE CHATTY S. Soon have summer on us now, I—a—was noticing only yesterday how—(*his voice is suddenly extinguished by what seems to be a bucket of water splashing over him—splutters and gasps. Uneasiness on part of E. N., who longs to hear him speak again.*)

AUST. SHAMP. (*ignoring this conversational opening*). On your back, Sir ; it's your right leg I want !

SECOND SHAMP. (*a talkative Person, to his Subject, who seems slightly reserved*). You've 'ad a reg'lar fine turn of it to-day, Sir—comin' off o' you beautiful ! (*Reluctant growl of assent from Subject.*) Now over, Sir, please. Bin to this noo Panorammer—Niagrer, Sir ? They tell me it's fust-rate. (*Inarticulate grunt from S.*) Water too 'ot for you, Sir ? (*Tremendous splashing, with some puffing and blowing.*) No time for goin' sightseein' myself, Sir ; got enough to do 'cre, Sir ! . . Looks a little tender, that foot, Sir—chiropodist on the premises, Sir, send him to you ? No, Sir ? Very good, Sir—Now on your face, if you'll be so good !

THE CHATTY S. (*indistinctly*). I—er—ha, suppose you're pretty f-full just now, eh ?

AUST. SHAMP. (*shortly*). Always busy 'cre, Sir. Sit up !

TALK. SHAMP. (*affectionately*). 'Ave a little soap on your 'ed, Sir ? Some of our gentlemen don't care for soap on *their* 'eds. Sing'ler, isn't it ?

THE B. B. (*bursting out again suddenly*). Capital cold plunge they've got here ! one of the longest in London—go in directly they're done shampooing you, swim across, and close your pores, come out the other side fresh as a daisy—that's what *I* do !

E. N. (*to himself*). Cold water—and I can't swim, *oh, Lor'!*

[*From the Shampooing Chamber are now proceeding sounds more alarming than ever, as of a lively tune being vigorously thumped with fists upon an unprotected body, followed by what is apparently a smart castigation.*

THE B. B. (*meditatively*). You'd think a man would be black and blue all over, after *that*, wouldn't you ? But, except in a very few cases, I don't know that such an effect ever actually follows. I'm not sure, though, that the pressure on the ribs——

THE PROWLING BATHER *claps his hands suddenly*. FIRST SHAMPOOER appears. “Lemon Squash?—I'll order it, Sir.” Stout Gentleman calls for water, and is served by Second Shampooer. Cries of distress are heard from the Shampooing Chamber. The E. N., drawn by a horrible fascination, approaches the arch, and looks in. The interior presents a Morgue-like appearance, and on a grey marble slab the RESERVED SUBJECT is sitting, soaped from head to foot, awaiting the return of the Operator in sullen resignation. The CHATTY PERSON is also neglected for the moment, and may be faintly perceived under the douche, staggering blindly, and gasping out—“That will do !”

THE TWO SHAMPOOERS (*returning by different doors*). Called away for a moment, Sir. (*They perceive the E. N., standing petrified in centre of floor.*) Take you next, Sir ? In another minute, Sir.

THE E. N. (*feebley*). Er—very well (*with a desperate resolution*), I—I'm going upstairs to get my watch—I mean my eye-glasses—back again presently.

[*Rushes upstairs, flies into his box, and dresses for dear life as scene closes in.*

Trafalgar Square.

SCENE—*Trafalgar Square*. Several thousand loafers and roughs discovered asserting right of free speech, free meeting, and free procession. A few hundred genuine artisans out of work standing about moodily. Lines of policemen drawn up in reserve look on impassively.

A LOVER OF LIBERTY. As an Englishman, sir, I'm disgusted—it's *un-English*, that's what it is, "dragooning" an inoffensive assembly like this! I *used* to think freedom of speech and action was the right of every Briton—but it seems we're to be overawed by the Police now—confounded impertinence on the part of the Government, I call it!

AN ORATOR (*leaping suddenly on parapet*). Feller Citizens, are you *Men* that you stand by with folded 'ands, while unlimited food and wealth lays within a stone's throw? I want yer—

CONSTABLES (*behind*). Ah, and *we* want *you*—off you go!

[*Disappearance of Orator in direction of Police Station.*

LOVER OF LIBERTY. Shame! Is a man to be punished for his opinions? Oh, England, England!

PERSON IN SEARCH OF SENSATION (*disappointedly*). Well, there doesn't seem much doing—so far.

SQUALID VAGABOND (*recognising STALWART CONSTABLE, whom he has apparently met before in a professional capacity.*) 'Ow are yer, pretty bobbish?

[*Nods to show he bears no malice.*

STALWART CONSTABLE (*good-humouredly*). I'm much as usual, thankee.

COMPANION CONSTABLE (*to S. C.*). Well, you *do* know some rough 'uns, I must say.



"'OW ARE YER? PRETTY BOBBISH, EH?"

STALWART C. Go on—that gentleman's a West Ender.

PROFESSIONAL "HOOK" (*to line of Policemen*). So you're 'ere, are you? Well, me and my pal must take *our* little promenade some hother artnoon, that's all!

SYMPATHISER (*to LOAFER*). And so you've actually been out of employment since last January! Monstrous! The Government ought to *find* you work!

LOAFER. Jes' what *I* say, Guv'nor. Let 'em gimme work, and I'll do it fast enough. *I* don't want ter be idle. I ain't on'y my one trade to earn my bread by—but I'll work at that, if I'm let!

SYMPATHISER. Exactly, my poor fellow, and what *is* your trade?

LOAFER. Why, I'm a skate-fastener, I am; puts on parties' skates for 'em,—and 'ere I am—not 'ad a job for months!

TRUCULENT RUFFIAN (*to QUIET OBSERVER*). Hunemployed?

QUIET OBS. Yes—at present.

T. R. Too many o' them bloomin' Coppers about, to *my* mind—I'd like to slug the lot—they're the ruin of *our* bisness!

QUIET OBS. Ah, you're right *there*!

DEMAGOGUE (*to POLICE SERGEANT*). Now, don't you interfere—that's all *I* ask. *I'll* speak to them—I have them thoroughly in hand just now, but if you offer them the least opposition, I—(*with much solemnity*) well, I won't be responsible for what happens. (*He is allowed to address the multitude.*) Friends, you are met here in this peaceful but imposing manner in the teeth of a brutal and overbearing Constabulary, to show the bloated Capitalists, who are now trembling behind their tills, that we mean to be taken seriously! Yes, in our squalor and our rags——

[*Throws open frock-coat, and displays thick gold watch-chain.*

MOB. Yah, pitch us over yer red slang! take orf that ere nobby coat! Harristocrat! Yah!

DEM. (*complacently*). It is true that I myself am not in absolute destitution. But what of that, my friends? Can I not *feel*——

[*Here a turnip strikes him in the eye. Yells of "Down with him!" "Duck him!" "Spy!" "Traitor!" MOB pulls him down and attempts to take him to pieces.*

DEM (*faintly*). Here, hi, Policemen, help! Why the devil don't you use your staves? [Is rescued and assisted home by Police.]

A ROUGH (*to POLICEMAN*). Keep moving? ah, I'll move!

[Kicks him on the knee-cap. POLICEMAN draws truncheon and hits back.]

CROWD (*indignantly*). Boo! Coward! Strikin' a unarmed man—down with him! [They beat brutal Constable to a jelly.]

THE TRUCULENT RUFFIAN (*to QUIET OBS.*) Are you game for a merry ole lark?

QUIET OBS. You *try* me—that's all!

T. R. Then, as them cowards of cops 'ave as much on their 'ands as they kin do with, now's the time for a bit of a loot! Pass the word to them mates o' yours—"Pall Mall and no tyranny!"

QUIET OBS. I've done it—they're only waiting for *you*.

T. R. (*suddenly producing red handkerchief*). There—now, boys! "Remember Mitchelstown and no brutal perlice!" Foller me!

QUIET OBS. (*arresting him*). No, you'll follow *us*, please—you won't do no good kicking, all right, mates, we've got him.

T. R. Oh, please, I didn't know you was a Policeman, sir, or I shouldn't ha' spoke! Strike me dead I was on'y in fun! (*Whimpers*.) And I've a good ole mother at 'ome, Sir.

THE PERSON IN SEARCH OF SENSATION. What, another arrest? and simply for showing a red handkerchief! I shall write and describe these atrocities. How abominably these police are behaving—actually defending themselves, the blackguards.

[A Policeman accidentally lifts his arm, whereupon about fifty youths scurry like rabbits; in the rush, the PERSON IN SEARCH OF SENSATION is hustled and slightly trampled on. He becomes annoyed, and hits out right and left—eventually striking a Constable in his excitement.]

CONST. (*who has been without sleep for the last two days and has just had his cheek laid open by a stone*). 'Ere, you come along with me, you're one of the wust, you are!

THE PERSON. But I assure you I just came to see what there was to be seen!

CONST. Well, you come along with me, and you'll see a Magistrat presently.

[THE PERSON resists ; struggles ; arrival of reinforcements ; exit party in "frog's-marching" order, conveying him to fresh sensations.

THE LOVER OF LIBERTY (*emerging from crush*). My hat ruined, my coat split down the back, and my watch gone! I told the crowd I was with them heart and soul—and they hit me in the stomach! What do we keep our police for, I want to know?

PROFESSIONAL (*emerging in opposite direction*). Three red clocks, two pusses, and a white slang, I ain't done so dusty! 'Ooray for the right o' Free Mcetin', I sez!

GENUINE UNEMPLOYED (*wearily*). Well, I dunno as I see what good all this 'ere is a goin' to do *hus*!

At a Hunt Steeple-Chase.

IN THE PADDOCK.

Horses being led round in Circle. Jockeys receiving final directions.

OWNER (*to JOCKEY*). Now—you know where you've to go? Down the hill, over the hurdles with the white flags—

[*Nod of intelligence from JOCKEY.*

TRAINER (*correctively*). Red flags.

OWNER. I mean red flags. Then keep along by the flying course and take the bank between the red flags—

TRAINER. White and red—first time.

OWNER. Red and white flags—through the gap when you turn—

TRAINER. Not through the gap till the second round.

OWNER. Oh, isn't it? Well, over the hedge then, white flags.

TRAINER. Not white flags for the banking course, Sir.

OWNER. And the Starter will tell you the rest. (*To TRAINER, as JOCKEY goes off to saddle mount.*) There—if that fellow makes any mistake now, he sha'n't ride for me again!

AN OWNER WITH A GRIEVANCE (*to anybody who will listen to him*). It's a sheäme o' they Stewards. Passed Giraffe, and gone and disqualified my mare, Camel, for being over height! See for yourself. Giraffe stands higher by a inch. Look at the teu together. I ask any fair-minded man They're all afreeäd of her!

[*As often as he sees a Member of the Committee, he drags his dis-qualified mare up to him, and harangues bitterly. Committee-men decline, with one accord, to reopen the question, and leave OWNER to ventilate his grievance outside, which he does, at intervals, throughout the day.*



"AND THE STARTER WILL TELL YOU THE REST."

ON THE COURSE.

ARTLESS YOUNG LADY (*on drag—to Organiser of Sweepstake*). Oh, ought I to pay you a shilling?—I didn't know—and take one of these tickets out of the hat. You must tell me *which!* May I open it yet? Number Two. Which *is* that? Oh, Sugartongs—white and silver. I must try and remember that.

[*Preliminary canter.*

SPORTSMAN (*on drag*). That's Jampot—cherry and plum sash. Best horse running to-day by a long chalk—regular clinker. Wish I could have got on at a better price. *There's action for you!*

THE ARTLESS ONE. He looks such a *scraggy* thing, and his jockey's wearing gaiters. I'm sure *he* won't win! Is that man with the red flag to race too? Why is he riding down there with them?

[*SPORTSMAN receives her prattle, which is intended to be very engaging, with silent contempt.*]

RUSTIC SPECTATORS. They're off—no—false start! They be oft neow, sure! Theer they go! *All over! . . . Pretty jumpin'! . . . Thcer's Toastrack!* Ben't Tommy a pikin' of en, tew? Well done, my sonny, go on! . . . Look at Jampot jumpin'—he's runnin' away from 'em all!

LADY SPORTSMAN. Why doesn't Jampot's jockey let him out?

HER HUSBAND. Well, it rather looks as if he was going to let the public *in!* Look at *that!*—deliberately waiting for Muffineer!

A SAGE (*in market-cart*). Tell'ee what—if that 'orse as is leadin' neow don't lose any more greound than that, 'e'll *win*. You mark my words!

CROWD (*on Grand Stand*). Eggcup's down! Butterdish has gone outside the flag—there, he'll hev to go back, he'll hev a job to get up to them now! Look at Jampot, he's ahead again . . . Beertiful strider, ben't he? Don't 'ee fall now, my darling! A-ah! Muffineer's on him again—he's passed en!

THE ARTLESS YOUNG LADY. Oh, *isn't* it exciting! (*Looks to see if any one is looking at her, and is disgusted to find that everybody is absorbed in the racing.*) I don't see *my* horse jumping. Why?

THE SPORTSMAN (*coldly*). Possibly because he came to grief at the second bank, and is being walked in.

ARTLESS ONE (*with a charming pout*). How perfectly *horrid* of it! Why do they all groan at Jampot so? Don't they want him to win?

THE S. Because his jockey's doing all he can to let Muffineer pass him.

ARTLESS ONE. But I think that's so nice and magnanimous of him!

THE S. I doubt if the Stewards will take your view of it. . . . There,

pulling the poor brute's head off! It's all over, and Muffinceer ought no more to have won than—

[*His feelings fail him. Crowd groan at JOCKEY as he pulls up, a bad second. JOCKEY affects a pained surprise.*]

IN THE PADDOCK.

CHORUS OF DISGUSTED SPORTSMEN. Well, after *that!* . . . I am dashed. Ever see anything more barefaced in all your life? So badly done, too! No wonder these country meetings are going down. . . . If this was under Grand National Rules—&c., &c.

EXCITED BOOKMAKER (*forcing his way in, and up to owner of Jampot*). It's a shame and a disgrace, Mr. Cubbard. You ought to be warned off every course in England! If Jampot could ha' broke his reins, he'd ha' won easy! It oughtn't to be allowed. 'Tisn't English, no, nor yet honourable. I tell you to your face you're a scoundrel, and you know it. It's all your doing!

[*Owner tries to look as if such accusations were beneath his notice, and walks away, pursued by BOOKMAKER.*]

INDIGNANT BACKER (*tackling Jampot's JOCKEY as he unsaddles*). Ye rode foul, ye did—ye're a slipshér! Ye pu'd the 'arse by the geatt when 'e was winnin'!

JAMPOT'S JOCKEY (*sulkily*). Ride better if ye like, but don't say I pu'd the 'arse!

I. B. I do say it. Ye're a disrespeckful man to ride on any course. Ye did pu' the 'arse, ye did!

J.'s J. (*with warmth*). Don't call me a disrespeckful man!

I. B. I do call ye a disrespeckful man. Ye done wrong!

J.'s J. Then don't say I pu'd the 'arse ageän! (*And so on, ad lib.*)

THE BOOKMAKER. Everyone on the course saw it. It's a scandalous thing, and there ought to be some notice taken of it. Fair is fair all the world over!

BYSTANDERS. 'Tis a trieu word. But, Satchell, 'e don't ought to cast first stone at en.

SPORTSMEN. No good bullyragging the boy. He had to ride to orders, or be turned off next day! Ah! here comes the Admiral! Now for a row!

OUTSIDE THE WEIGHING-ROOM.

Inquiry proceeding; SECRETARY keeping door against surging Crowd.

SECRETARY (*to a tall man who is trying to look through a chink*). Don't 'ee now, Sir, don't. Don't take an unfair advantage of your superior height. The proceedings are strictly private.

THE TALL MAN. You be blowed! I've paid my half-crown, and I mean to see all I can for the money!

CROWD (*peeping through window*). They've got the boy in there. He's getting a rare good wigging. (*Door opens.*) A Voice—Send Mr. Cubbard here!

THE SEC. Mr. Cubbard! Wanted by the Stewards. Policeman, pass the word for Mr. Cubbard!

CROWD (*with relish*). Cubbard 'll catch it now.

POLICEMAN (*with a grin*). Mr. Cubbard gone 'ome, Sir.

[*Murmur, commending MR.C.'S discretion.*

Inquiry over. Stewards come out of Weighing-room perspiring freely.

Crowd press around to hear result.

STEWARDS. You'll see our decision in the papers to-morrow. You won't hear any more to-day; so it's no use bothering. Here, let's get out of this!

STABLE-BOY (*to Jampot's TRAINER*). Will Jampot be wanted any more to-day, Sir?

TRAINER (*gloomily*). You can take him home, soon as you like.

AFTER THE LAST RACE.

FIRST OWNER OF LOSING HORSE. You see it was this way. Toastrack had a strange boy on his back, and so o' course——

SECOND DITTO. That theer boy's bin ridin' tew many races, he hev.

They git weak, ridin' so much. I *told* en not to let Butterdish bolt with en—he *will* bolt at times.

THIRD DITTO. Eggcup didn't fell. 'Twas her jockey falled off o' she. She was gallopin' away from them all. She'd a come in teu fealds ahead 'ithout that.

FOURTH DITTO. Oh, that other was ridden very jealous, and so old Sugartongs she got baulked at the bank. If there'd 'a bin another reound she'd ha gien 'em all a proper doin', sure 'nough!

FIFTH DITTO. I've sin Creamjug run a deal rougher nor that. She run away from a field o' fourteen-two galloways in a flat-race once, she did. She worn't in form to-day, that's all.

[*They go home, each with a comforting conviction that he has won what the leader-writers on bye-elections would call "a moral victory."*]

At a Wedding.

SCENE—*Interior of Church. Wedding Guests arriving, and exchanging airy recognitions as they settle down in their places. Bridesmaids in various states of self-consciousness, collected at door. Loud and sustained buzz of feminine whispering.*

POLICEMAN (*on guard at another door, to people with a mania for seeing complete strangers married*). Very sorry, ladies, but if you're not provided with tickets, I can't let you in.

THE PEOPLE (*with a mania, &c.*). But this is a public place, isn't it?

POLICEMAN (*not feeling competent to argue the point*). Those are my orders. [THE PEOPLE, &c., depart disconsolate.

VERGER (*to GUESTS with pink tickets*). Any of those seats there.

“PINK” GUESTS (*attempting to pass a crimson rope which bars the central passage*). We want to be near the altar—we can't see here!

VERGER (*in a superior manner*). The higher seats are set apart for parties with *white* tickets.

“PINK” GUESTS (*to one another indignantly*). And after we'd sent that girl a salad-bowl, too!

[They employ themselves in picking out “White” Guests who ought properly to have been “Pink,” remark that it is the most shamefully-managed wedding they ever saw, and recur bitterly at intervals to the salad-bowl.

MRS. RIPPLEBROOK (*who always comes early “to see the people”*). Oh,

there'll be a tremendous crush, of course—they know *everybody*. Look, the De Lacy Vespes have just come in—what a pity it is that eldest girl has such a red nose—she'd be *quite* goodlooking without it! . . . There's Narcissus Runderceed, you see *him* everywhere. (*Bows and smiles at him effusively.*) Horrid creature! And *how* fat he's getting! Do you know who *that* is? That's Miss Mabel Maycup of the "Proscenium," you know,—looks ever so much older by daylight, doesn't she? I suppose she's not one of the *bride's* friends! By the way, have you ever met *him*—this Pilbergilt man, the bridegroom, I mean? Oh, my dear, a perfect horror! Ten years older than she is, and one hears *such* stories about him! In fact, it was only his money that—but her people were *delighted*, of course. Ah, she's coming now; look how the bridesmaids are all "preening" themselves! That's the bridegroom—*doesn't* he look yellow?

BEST MAN (*in a whisper to BRIDEGROOM*). Pull yourself together, old chappie, you are looking *so* chippy!

BRIDEGROOM. *I feel* chippy, too. Fact is, those farewell suppers are a mistake—I'll never give another.

MRS. RIPPLEBROOK. Now the choir are going down to meet them. Don't you wish they'd invent a new hymn for weddings? I'm *so* tired of that "Eden" one. There she is. I always think this is such a *solemn* moment, don't *you*? Can you see whether it's silk or *suede* gloves the bridesmaids are wearing? That's her father, whose arm she's on. They say he disapproved, but he doesn't count. Her mother's behind with the hook nose; why on earth *she* should cry, I *don't* know—it's all *her* doing! She makes a pale bride, doesn't she? But white duchesse satin would be trying even to a beauty. I hear she threw over poor young Oldglove most shamefully. *Why* does that tiresome old bishop mumble so? I can't hear a word.

HOUSEMAID BELONGING TO BRIDE'S FAMILY (*to NURSE*). I wonder at that Louisa Jane taking on herself to cry, when she only came Toosday fortnight! Now you and me have got some *claim* to cry.

THE NURSE (*loftily*). Them kitchen-maids can't be expected to know their place, or what's required of them!

IN THE VESTRY.

General congratulations, compliments, kisses, and signatures.

BRIDEGROOM (*to BEST MAN*). I say, dear boy, I look to you to square all these Johnnies, you know.

[*Which is his irreverent mode of designating the Bishop and his assistant clergymen.*]

IN CHURCH, DURING THE INTERVAL.

MRS. RIPPLEBROOK. Very daring of them to be married in May, isn't it? I knew a girl who was married in May once—and the very first time they gave a dinner-party, her cook came up drunk soon after the salmon, and gave her warning before everybody! *dreadful*, wasn't it? I suppose you'll go on to the house and see the presents? Do—I'm going. Oh, you've seen mine? It is handsome, isn't it? I was going to get her quite an ordinary one at the Stores—but that was when I thought she was only going to be Mrs. Oldglove. Ah, there's the "Wedding March" at last; here they come!

[*BRIDE and BRIDEGROOM pass slowly down central passage, recognizing their friends at hazard; several are left unnoticed with their elaborately prepared smile wasting its sweetness on the bride's brothers. A young man, rather negligently dressed, who has been standing behind MRS. RIPPLEBROOK the whole time, forces his way to the front.*]

THE Y. M. (*to himself*). She shall see me—if she has the courage to meet my eye after her conduct!

THE BRIDE. What, Mr. Oldglove? I'd no idea you were in town! We shall see you presently, I hope.

[*She passes on, leaving the Y. M. to think of all the scathing replies he might have made.*]

AN OLD MAID (*weeping in the gallery; she has got in as "the Bridegroom's Aunt," a character in which she attends every wedding*). Poor young things!—to think of all the troubles before them!

BRIDEGROOM'S FRIENDS. Pretty wedding, wasn't it ?

BRIDE'S FRIENDS. *Not* a pretty wedding, was it ?

IN THE CARRIAGE.

BRIDEGROOM (*finding the silence embarrassing*). Hope they'll give us time enough to change, and all that. Horrid bore if we missed our train and had to wait !

BRIDE. Oh, if you are going to find everything a bore *already* !

BRIDEGROOM. Well, *isn't* it ?

[Silence returns.]

IN THE DRAWING-ROOM.

Presents laid out ; GUESTS wandering round, keeping a furtive look-out for their own offerings, and feeling deeply incensed if they are not prominently displayed. Others consult the congratulatory telegrams as though they were of European interest. A DETECTIVE, noticeable by his sumptuous get-up and his uneasy bearing, watches the jewellery. SHORTSIGHTED OLD GENTLEMAN (friend of the BRIDE'S) approaches, and, misled by DETECTIVE'S festal attire, takes him for the bridegroom.

THE S. O. G. (*with emotion*). This is a great responsibility you have undertaken to-day, sir. I hope you will be—ah—worthy of it.

DET. (*professionally sensitive*). Thank you ; but it's not the first time I've undertaken such a job, not by a very long way.

THE S. O. G. (*moving off aghast*). This is dreadful!—they *can't* know ! How many times, and where are they all now ? Oh, some one ought to speak to her mother ! I would myself—only—

[Goes in search of some champagne.]

THE BRIDE'S MOTHER (*to GUEST*). So kind of you to remember my girl, and to send her that charming—(*she suddenly forgets whether she is speaking to the donor of the nineteenth carriage clock, or the fifteenth fish-slice*)—that charming—er—(*mumble*)—quite the prettiest—er—(*mumble*)—I ever saw. But you always have such taste.

[*Mild surprise of GUEST, conscious of having presented, in despair, a plated toast-rack of unpretentious design.*]



"IT'S NOT THE FIRST TIME I'VE UNDERTAKEN SUCH A JOB—NOT BY A VERY LONG WAY."

MR. OLDGLOVE (*who has come on after all—bitterly to the BRIDE*). All I can wish you, Mrs.—(*choking*)—Mrs. Pilbergilt, is that you may be as happy as—as you *deserve*!

THE BRIDE (*sweetly*). Thanks awfully. That's the prettiest thing I've had said to me yet. (*To NEIGHBOUR*.) Oh, Mr. Cashley, how *am* I to thank you?—that *lovely* plate-warmer!

[MR. O. *retires baffled, and contemplates committing suicide with a piece of wedding-cake.*]

IN THE CARRIAGE.

THE BRIDEGROOM. Well, *that's over*!

BRIDE (*icily*). I wish you would contrive not to fidget so!

BRIDEGROOM. When a fellow has about a stone-and-a-half of rice down the back of his neck, it makes him rather restless. What are all the chappies staring at us for? I'm sure we don't look as newly-married as all *that*!

BRIDE (*complacently*). *You* would not notice such trifles; but Eulalie has really surpassed herself over my going-away dress.

BRIDEGROOM. No, by Jove, I'm hanged if it's *that*!

BRIDE. Perhaps you think *you* are the attraction?

BRIDEGROOM. Spotted it as we passed that shop-window. I say—er—Albinia, I'm not joking—*really* I'm not! There's a beast of a white satin slipper on the roof of the brougham!

At a Bond Street Gallery.

SCENE—*Exhibition Rooms of a well-known Art Dealer's, where the main attraction is a very charming collection of Japanese impressions by a Rising Painter. In the first room are displayed miscellaneous landscapes and figure-subjects by other painters, which two PROSAIC PERSONS are inspecting in puzzled silence.*

FIRST PROSAIC PERSON (*after examining pictures of coast scenery by "Mr. William Stott, of Oldham"*). I daresay it's all right—but it's not *my* idea of Japan ! [Feels vaguely defrauded.]

SECOND P. P. (*sensibly*). I expect, if the truth was told, most places are pretty much alike. Seems to be something going on in the further room, though,—better go in and see if there's anything to be seen there, eh ?

[They enter the inner Gallery, which is draped in dull carnation and pale yellow, and hung with sketches framed in old gold and dead copper, arranged in somewhat irregular order. Visitors are moving slowly from one picture to the other, making enthusiastic comments in a reverent whisper.]

FIRST P. P. (*a little dubiously*). This looks more like it. Very eccentric, though, sticking the pictures about in patches like this !

SECOND P. P. (*shrewdly*). Oh, they naturally want to make 'em go as far as they can, but they might have hung 'em in patterns,—much neater-looking than this. Will you get a Catalogue, or shall I ?

FIRST P. P. (*without feeling in his pockets*). Well, I'm not sure whether I have any silver about me.

SECOND P. P. That little Japanese girl, who sells them, will give you change, if you ask her.

FIRST P. P. (*annoyed*). How the dooce am I to ask for change, when I don't know the language?

SECOND P. P. Oh, *I'll* get it, then. I'll make her understand somehow. (*Goes up to little JAP. LADY, and proceeds to gesticulate elaborately with a shilling.*) You give me—one book, I give you—this. You understand?

JAP. LADY. (*sedately*). I unnerstan' verri well. But the Catalogue is only seekspence—I can give you change.

SECOND P. P. (*returning to friend with Catalogue*). Wonderful how you can get along with signs! I never have any difficulty wherever *I* go.

[*They proceed to examine the pictures.*]

FIRST P. P. I wonder why they've all got a little red spot on the frame?

SECOND P. P. Oh, they put that on to show they're sold. Same as a star, you know.

FIRST P. P. But some of them are *ticketed* "sold."

SECOND P. P. (*staggered*). Well, you may depend on it, it isn't done without *some* reason. Pity he don't *finish* his things more, isn't it?

FIRST P. P. I daresay he wasn't given time. I've heard the authorities are very particular out there. (*Pointing to sketch of village street.*) Those Chinese lanterns aren't bad, though.

SECOND P. P. N-no, but you can get *them* anywhere now.

AN ANCIENT AMATEUR (*with loud voice, patronisingly to MANAGER*). I congratulate you—very attractive exhibition you've got here—exceedingly so, indeed!

MANAGER (*foreseeing a potential purchaser*). It's having a great success, certainly. Have you seen the Press notices?

[*Shows cuttings, mounted on pieces of cardboard.*]

THE A. A. (*waving them away*). I don't require any papers to tell *me* what to admire. And I say again, there is some remarkably good work here—I don't care who hears me!

MANAGER. Quite so—now here's a fine one, look at the purity of that colour, now? And not expensive.

THE A. A. Isn't it, though? Well, if Mr. (*mentioning name of rising*



GESTICULATES ELABORATELY WITH SHILLING.

Painter) was here, I could tell him something he might find worth his attention.

MANAGER. I think he is in the Gallery. Ah! there he is. Would you like to be introduced to him?

THE A. A. (*with condescension*). Certainly, certainly, by all means! (*Introduction effected accordingly. Rising Painter slightly mystified*) How are you?—how are you? Very glad to have this opportunity. Always glad to see the younger men succeeding. (*Rising Painter, more mystified than ever, wonders who the deuce he is.*) I know all about these things. I daresay you'll know my name when I mention it. (*Importantly.*) I'm Jabberley, Sir. I've been to Japan. (*As if the R. P. hadn't.*)

[*By this time a small crowd has collected, under the impression that the A. A. is the Painter himself.*

THE R. P. (*courteously vague*). Oh, Jabberley, to be sure—of course! And you have been out there?

THE A. A. (*louder than ever*). I have; and I may say I know something of the effects it is possible to get with that atmosphere. I sketched a good deal while I was there, purely for my own amusement, you understand (*the R. P. bows*), and I can give you a hint you may find useful next time you go. You get some rice—plain, ordinary rice—you follow me? (*General interest on part of Public.*) Well, you boil it, strain off the water, and put in your skies with *that*, d'ye see? (*Suppressed fury on part of R. P.*) You'll find it'll give a *glaze*, Sir, that it would take you a lifetime to get in any other way! And (*impressively*) there's this further advantage—when you've done, there's your rice, as good as ever. Now, you take my advice, and *try* it. Good day—most happy to have been of any service to you!

[*Exit A. A., leaving R. P. perfectly speechless with indignation.*

A WELL-MEANING LADY-VISITOR. They're simply too lovely, *all* of them. I could quite fancy myself in the Japanese Village at Knightsbridge, you know!

FIRST P. P. (to SECOND *ditto*). Here, *you've* got the Catalogue—what's No. 56?

SECOND P. P. "The Tea-House of the Slender Trees"—at least (*cautiously*) that's what it's *down* as.

FIRST P. P. (*blankly*). Oh, a fancy title, I suppose—and the next?

SECOND P. P. (*referring to Catalogue as before*). "A Japanese Fifine at the Fair."

FIRST P. P. A Japanese *what* at the Fair?

SECOND P. P. "Fifine" seems to be the native name for a girl out here. Here's an odd subject now—62. "*Two Singing Girls waiting for a Jimrickshaw.*" Don't understand what that means—sounds like nonsense to me. [Which is his way of saying that it is nonsense.]

FIRST P. P. No subject in that. I like a picture that tells you at a glance what it's all about, but what are you to make of a "jimrickshaw?" What's this one with the umbrella?

SECOND P. P. (*reading*). "'*The Child and the Umbrella.*' The umbrella is pitched by the side of the stall to shade it from the intense sunlight."

FIRST P. P. (*suspiciously*). Is that in the Catalogue?

SECOND P. P. (*hurt*). You can read it for yourself if you like.

FIRST P. P. Well, he needn't have gone to Japan to find out *that*! Have you had enough of it?

SECOND P. P. I don't want to see any more. And (*with a show of humility*) it may be my bad taste—perhaps it is—but I'd rather have one good honest English oleograph than a dozen of these outlandish things. (*Proudly.*) I would indeed!

[They make their way out, with glances of wondering pity at the other Visitors, who (not being PROSAIC PERSONS) are showing a very evident appreciation of the Exhibition—a circumstance which possibly consoles the Rising Painter and his Manager for any exceptions to the general rule.]

At a Legal Luncheon-Bar.

SCENE—*A Restaurant in the neighbourhood of the Courts of Justice. At the Bar, members of both branches of the legal Profession discovered lunching on high stools ; behind Bar, bustling staff of barmaids, kitchen-maids, and small boys in white caps, superintended by Energetic Manager of a cheerfully familiar disposition.*

VOICES BEHIND THE BAR. Small roast beef cut lean, Robert ! . . When does that mutton mean to come ? . . . plates, Jenny, look alive, there ! . . . Were *you* the dumpling, Sir ? Oh, the sausage and plain ; I *beg* your pardon ! . . . More prongs !

[This last—a pleasing synecdoche for forks—from the MANAGER.

SOLICITORS' CLERKS BEFORE THE BAR. Can't let you have that further abstract yet, but it's being attended to . . . We ought to have had notice of that last affidavit they filed ! . . . Costs on higher scale . . . Not the practice to give copy affidavit without the jurat—told 'em so ! Notice to produce all their books for the last sixteen years, &c., &c.

[Shower just ceasing. Enter a SURLY MAN, umbrella-less and drenched.

Barmaid (to him, pleasantly). The rain has been coming down, Sir, hasn't it ?

THE SURLY MAN. Never saw it coming *up*—did you ?

[Barmaid subsides, pouting.

THE ENERGETIC MANAGER (to S. M.) Good morning, Sir, you've brought the sunshine in with you ! (Savage growl from the S. M.) But that (politely) I'm sure you *always* do ! New or stale bread, Sir ? (Presenting plate with two squares of bread and indicating one of them.) Stale is *this* chap. Let me



"YOU'VE BROUGHT THE SUNSHINE IN WITH YOU."

see (*with the air of a man who studies his customers' little peculiarities*), it's cawfee you like with your little lunch, isn't it, Sir ?

THE S. M. Coffee ? No ! it's poison to me. Stout !

THE E. M. Stout, of course it is ! You shall have it, Sir ! (*As if it was a rare and costly beverage ; but he would search the universe to procure a drop or two.*) Oh, you shall have it !

ENTER a YOUNG BARRISTER with a COUNTRY CLIENT. THE YOUNG BARRISTER has just lost his first case in Court, and would much rather not lunch, but is anxious not to offend his Client, who, so far, has "taken it very well—considering."

THE COUNTRY CLIENT (*with a sigh*). Well ! I did think the Court would have been with us—but there, I suppose it can't be helped.

[*He has been saying this for the last ten minutes.*

THE YOUNG BARRISTER (*for the twentieth time*). You—you can never tell beforehand what view the Bench is going to take. (*As if he had had years of experience.*) I did my best. (*A little defiantly, in faint hope of forcing a compliment.*)

THE C. C. (*with rather offensive magnanimity*). Oh, I'm not blaming you, my boy—though (*he has been trying to keep from saying this ever since the Court rose*) it was a pity you gave the other side that opening by re-examining as you did. Didn't you see that note I passed up from the well ?

THE Y. B. (*not liking this*). Which ? You passed up such a lot, you know !

THE C. C. I wish you had paid more attention to them—I know that ! Well, never mind, I do think Allabye, Q.C., might have found time to look in, instead of leaving you to fight it alone. I told Staple and Verulam I must have a leading brief given—and this is the result ! By the way, that was a smart young fellow against you—know who he is ?

THE Y. B. (*with a pang of jealousy*). Oh, I don't know. (*With affected carelessness.*) Some Common Law fellow, I believe. (*After pause—more candidly.*) Prisk his name is.

THE C. C. Very sharp the way he took you up over the registration point—why, bless my soul ! (*with a pleased recognition*)—he's coming in now (*Enter Mr. PRISK, with a jaunty self-satisfied air, and an eye-glass ; the C. C.*

makes room for him with marked deference, while the Y. B. assumes a stony abstraction.) Allow me, Sir, we've met before to-day—*Potter v. Kettleby*, y' know—we can afford to shake hands over it now, eh ?

PRISK. To be sure. You acted for the plaintiff, didn't you? Oh, it was a walk over for us—you hadn't a leg to stand on!

THE C. C. I don't know that. I was strongly advised to rely on "Hugger and Mugger"—

PRISK. Cuts both ways, that case. I put that to the judge—then your own witness—what was his name?—Puddleby, did for *you*; that answer I got out of him on the re-examination—that gave me all *I* wanted!

THE Y. B. (*who has been listening to all this on the other side of his Client, and thinks it time to strike in and change the subject*). Are you—a—going back to Yokelford this afternoon?

THE C. C. (*testily*). Eh, what? Oh, forgot you were there! Going back? Yes, yes, of course! What is there to do here, *now*? (*Turns to Mr. PRISK in a marked manner*.) Yes, I am glad to have this opportunity of telling you, Sir, how very much struck I was with the way you conducted your case. I may say so, now it's all over. I can recognize ability (*with a disparaging glance at the Y. B.*), when I *do* happen to come across it!

PRISK (*nonchalantly*). Delighted to hear you say so—hard-fought case —er—(*recognizes the Y. B. and thinks he can afford to be generous*)—on *both* sides. (*To Attendant*.) Here! *I* said mutton.

THE C. C. Well, we had a good case—on paper. I suppose Mr.—er—Prisk, thank you! I suppose you don't confine yourself to any particular class of practice?

PRISK. Bless you, no! Take anything that comes in my way—trouble you to pass the salt.

THE C. C. (*pompously*). Ah, just so, I shall remember that—Prisk, and your address is in the Law List, I daresay?

PRISK. Ought to be—been there for six years now. (*To Barmaid*.) Get me some cheese and butter, will you?

THE C. C. (*to the Y. B.*) You don't seem to be getting on—I must be off soon.

THE Y. B. (*feeling forlorn and neglected*). They haven't brought me my chop yet (*plaintively*).

THE C. C. (*patronisingly*). You should *assert* yourself more—that's the way to get on in this life. (*To the E. M.*) When is this gentleman to have his chop?

THE E. M. Waiting for your chop, Sir? Sorry you didn't mention it, Sir—work of time, a chop is, Sir. (*Loudly.*) Here—*urry* up that grill-chop, there! (*The cry is taken up, and carried down into the far distance, until the Y. B. feels thoroughly ashamed of his chop, and wishes he could sneak off and desert it.* The E. M. to small boy with plate.) Roast beef and Yorkshire—right! there's a good bo-oy! Now then, my dear, don't take all the room there! (*Putting his hand on Barmaid's shoulder and turning her round, which she appears to resent privately.*)

THE C. C. Well, I can't stay here all day. Good day, Mr. Prisk, glad to have made your acquaintance—hope we shall find ourselves on the same side next time! By-by, Timmerman (*To Y. B.*)

[*Exit C. C., leaving TIMMERMAN and PRISK side by side. T. pretends not to see P.*

PRISK (*with a nod to T.*). Thought I knew your face. Rum old boy, that Client of yours!

T. (*bitterly*). He won't be a Client of *mine* much longer!

P. (*easily*). Oh, I don't know—you didn't do so badly. If you'd taken the line I *thought* you were going to take, I should have been up a tree. (*Consolingly.*) Every one muffs it at starting, and but for—

T. (*not very far from choking*) Thank you—but it isn't much good discussing all that over again!

P. (*with exasperating good temper*). Not a bit—if you don't like it! Mistake to carry personal feeling into a case, though,—you'll find that out when you've been at it a little longer!

[*He pays his bill and strolls out, leaving the Y. B. to cherish wild thoughts of "chucking-up" the Bar, and going in for ranching or diamond-digging.*

E. M. (*returning briskly*). Your chop at last, Sir! (*in a tone of deep*

mystery and confidential congratulation, as if it didn't occur every day), and a hot potato, Sir!

[In his vivacity he slams the dishes on the counter with a force that upsets the Y. B.'s beer into his plate, and shoots a very floury potato into his necktie.

THE Y. B. (*with a sense that nothing will prosper with him any more*).
Oh, it doesn't matter—don't bother about it! (*He smiles in a sickly manner*.)

THE E. M. (*noticing the smile with approval*). Glad you are able to see the *merry* side of it, Sir!

[Scene closes on the Y. B. pecking dolefully at his chop, wondering what his Client is saying of him now, and wishing he had never been born.

At a Water-Picnic.

MISS FRITILLA PAPILLION (*arriving at landing-stage with her brother*). Why, Teddy, isn't that Stella Cindershaw?

MR. PAPILLION (*dissembling his rapture*). Is it? I daresay.

[*Looks carelessly about, and wishes he had had a new ribbon put on his straw.*]

MR. PETTICURE (*elderly, but of youthful exterior, who has undertaken the control of the expedition*). Then we're all here now? I've told them to get the boats ready. I thought we'd just pull quietly up to Eelbuck Island, land there, and have our picnic and—and what not, and drift comfortably down in time for the last up-train, eh?

[*General Chorus of "Delightful!" "Charming!" &c.*

MISS MANLEY (*observing MR. BUNCOMBE'S elaborately aquatic attire*). I needn't ask if you are going to row.

MR. BUNC. (*modestly*). Oh, if I'm wanted. But they seem to have nothing but fixed seats in these boats. I've got so used to a slider.

MR. PAPILLION (*who has been making some highly artful arrangements on his own account, coming up to MISS CINNERSHAW*). I—er—think you're in my boat, Miss Cindershaw?

MISS C. (*with a sweet smile*). Oh, am I? Then we'd better be getting in, hadn't we?

PETTICURE (*arriving at the exact moment when MR. PAPILLION, overjoyed at his success, is handing Miss C. into boat*). Here—here, stop a bit—let me see, Papillion, you're going to stroke, eh? Very well. Defadder bow. Miss Moule steering. Capital!—but Miss Stella? No, no, that won't do—can't spare you; must have you in with us!



"I NEEDN'T ASK IF YOU'RE GOING TO ROW?"

MISS C. (*with, if possible, a still sweeter smile*). Must you? Oh, very well.

PETT. And, Papillion, I'll put somebody else in Miss Stella's place. Ah, Miss Squeams; (*in an undertone*) nice chatty girl—you don't mind about looks, I know. That's all right, then, *you're* settled.

GOING UP-STREAM.

MISS MOULE (*to MR. PAPILLION, who is rowing with the gloom of a galley-slave*). There's nothing more delightful, don't you think, than an excursion on the water? It's the *right* string you pull when you want to go to the left, isn't it? I never *can* remember! And there's a barge or a steamer coming.

[MR. P. just conquers temptation to leave her to exercise her own discretion.

In the Second Boat.

MRS. BALLAST. Trim the boat, Mr. Rullocks! Now, what a pretty poetical idea of yours! But you must wait till we get to some water lilies.

In the Third Boat.

MISS MANLEY (*stroke, to MRS. DEDWAYTE*). Could you manage to keep her head a little straighter, dear?

MRS. DEDW. I am trying as hard as I *can*, Atalanta—but it *will* keep going to one side!

MR. BUNCOMBE (*in a gallant manner to MISS M.*) Afraid I'm pulling you round.

MISS M. (*who has been rowing with one hand for the last half-minute*). Are you indeed? I didn't notice. (MR. B. executes an elaborate backfall). Don't apologise; I suppose you forgot you were on a fixed seat.

[MR. B., from the bottom of the boat, is understood to attribute the accident to some peculiarity in the button of his oar.

The boat which carries MISS CINNERSHAW sweeps gaily by MR. PAPILLION'S; MISS C. is rowing under MR. RULLOCKS' supervision.

MR. RULL. (*with a tender patronage*). Better, Miss Cinnershaw, much better! Don't cover more than the blade of your oar, and drop your wrists at the finish—beautiful indeed!

MISS C. I shall soon get into the way of it, now I have some one to coach me properly.

MR. P. (*grinding his teeth, to MR. DEFADDER, who is inserting an oar in the water placidly at intervals*). Shall we—er—quicken up a bit, Sir?

MR. DEF. Eh? Rest a bit? By all means, by all means! [He eases.

MISS PAPILLION (*playfully from MISS C.'S boat, as it rapidly recedes*). Good-bye, Teddy, dear, don't overtake yourself!

[*He hears her voice from afar informing MISS C. that poor TEDDY is getting quite round-shouldered.*

MISS SQUEAMS. Don't let us hurry, Mr. Papillion, it's so much nicer to glide gently along. And by and by, when we get to a quiet part, I want you to teach me how to row. I've so often wished to learn, but I'm such a dreadful coward in a boat—with *most* people!

ON THE ISLAND.

MR. PAPILLION (*after landing, and finding himself close to MISS CINNERSHAW*). I hope (*huskily*) you had a pleasant row?

MISS C. Oh, delightful! I rowed part of the way, and then Mr. Rullocks and I towed.

MISS FRITILLA (*to her brother, archly*). Teddy, how disgracefully you behaved with that Miss Squeams—we saw you!

[*MR. P. thinks people ought to know better than invite a fellow with his sister to this sort of thing.*

MR. PETT. (*to numerous private inquiries*). It's no good—we can't do anything till Buncombe's boat comes up; they've got the champagne, and the knives, and all the plates—and they're not in sight yet!

MR. P. (*making a second approach to MISS C.*). I don't think this party has been very well managed.

MISS C. Oh, *don't* you? I thought Mr. Petticure arranged everything so beautifully!

[MR. P. is about to explain what he considers were errors of judgment, as MR. PETTICURE comes up with an immense bunch of grasses.

MR. PETT. (*with the air of an authority on costume*). I've been wondering all the morning *what* it was your hat wanted to make it absolute perfection, Miss Stella! Allow me—one moment—there . . . (*he fastens bunch into her hat*) charming—charming!

[MISS C. submits as sweetly as ever.

MR. PAP. (*indignantly, as MR. PETTICURE ambles off*). But you don't approve of that, surely?

MISS C. Oh, no—it's hideous, but I can't take them out very well now, can I?

[MR. P. is about to express his sense of her angelic consideration—when his sister intervenes as usual.

MISS FRITILLA. Now, Teddy, I want to talk to Stella very particularly. Go and make yourself useful with the hampers, or there's poor Miss Squeams all alone there!

[MR. BUNCOMBE'S boat arrives an hour late, with MISS MANLEY and MRS. DEDWAYTE in shocking bad tempers, as he has volunteered to steer, and broken two sculls getting into a lock; B. is as serenely pleased with himself as ever, and says the Conservators ought to make the lock entrances wider.

MISS SQUEAMS (*to MR. PAPILLION*). I thought Mr. Buncombe was such a "crack oar," as you call it?

MR. PAPILLION (*who is feeling misanthropic*). I don't know what you expected—but he's smashed two already.

AFTER THE PICNIC.

MR. PETTICURE is secretly depressed because a young man in a burst of effusion has wished that he had a father like him. Several Ladies "think they felt a spot of rain." Packing begins in confusion.

PETT. (*coming up to PAPILLION*). Look here, we must make some alterations going back. Miss Manley's very anxious to get back as soon possible—so's Miss Cinnershaw.

PAP. (*trying to repress his delight*). Yes? and you want me to,—eh?

PETT. Exactly, old fellow, to take Miss Atalanta Manley's place in Buncombe's boat.

PAP. And—er—how's Miss Cinnershaw going?

PATT. Oh, in *my* boat—it's the fastest; with Miss Stella and Miss Manley and Rullocks, rowing randan, we can drop down in no time, and take some of the old people on with us—you and Buncombe can manage without a cox, I daresay.

OUTSIDE THE STATION.

BUNC. There's plenty of time, I tell you. What's the matter with you? You've been as grumpy as a pig all the way down. I *told* you I didn't feel up to doing much work coming back. Of course I shouldn't have run into the bank if I'd seen where I was going; but, after all, the damage to the boat won't come to much between us, and it didn't delay us half-an-hour! What, just missed the last train? Well, I thought it was rather a forlorn hope—but your sister will be all right, you know. And you and I, old chap, must keep up one another's spirits at the hotel, eh?

[PAPILLION, who has been reckoning on the railway journey as his last chance, is incapable of replying.

The Musical Prodigy.

SCENE.—*The Box-Office, a few minutes before the hour at which little MASTER POUSHKIN POPONANOFF, the very latest, youngest, and smallest of Precocious Pianists, has announced his Morning Concert. Music-loving Public besieging pigeon-hole.*

CLERK (*in answer to several frantic appeals*). All the shilling seats are gone long ago.

APPLICANTS (*imploringly*). But there's standing-room, surely? We don't mind, as long as we can get in!

CLERK (*relenting*). It's just possible there may be a few inches left at the back—you can go in and see, if you like.

[*Applicants pass in gratefully, to stand patiently, for two hours and a half, in a tropical climate.*

IN THE CONCERT-ROOM.

POLITE ATTENDANT (*to a STRONG-MINDED MATRON, who insists on standing with her numerous family in the gangway between the five-shilling seats*). I really must ask you to go further back, Madam—your tickets were for the shilling seats—you have no right to block the passage here.

THE S. M. There's no room in the shilling seats. I have brought my family all the way from Haverstock Hill on purpose to hear little Poushkin, and it's not likely I shall go away now.

[*The POLITE A. summons two other P. A.'s., who urge the propriety of retiring.*

THE S. M. (*with spirit*). If those are your orders, execute them ! I am only a woman, with these defenceless children, but I warn you that I will yield to nothing but superior force—you will have to drag us out !

[*The P. A.'s smile at one another feebly, and remain irresolute, with the bearing of baffled tyrants at a minor theatre.*]

THE S. M. (*following up her advantage*). Then perhaps you will let us have some programmes ?

[*The P. A.'s supply her meekly, and retire in discomfiture, leaving the S. M. and her family, flushed but triumphant, in undisputed possession.*]

MUSICAL AMATEUR *in Stall* (*consulting programme*). Nothing very new, I see. How often I've heard Liszt play that Rhapsody ! But it will really be very curious and instructive to see how this child takes it. I hear some of his renderings are quite original.

Little MASTER POUSHKIN appears on platform, and is received with tumultuous applause.

ENTHUSIASTIC PERSON (*who has read up an account of an interview with Youthful Pianist in the paper*). Isn't he sweet ? Such perfect self-possession ! See, he has to have a little pair of steps to climb on the music-stool ! Do you know he positively refuses to play a note unless they put one of his tin soldiers on the piano ? I think that's so charming of him !

HERR HEUMACHER SONNENSCHEIN (*in the front row, to his Infant Daughter, a still more surprising Phenomenon, who is coming out next week*). Remember, Ottolie, you clap your hands the instant the first movement is over ; but the flowers you will throw when I tell you.

A MOTHER, to MASTER JACKY (*who has just begun the piano, and has been brought here to rouse his ambition*). Now, Jacky, you see what a little boy can do when he tries.

JACKY (*who has instantly conceived a violent aversion to the Y. P.*) It's all very fine, but I'd like to see him sit down to play some of my scales—he wouldn't look so cocky *then* !

GOVERNESS (*improvingly, to SPECTACLED SCHOOL-GIRL*). Just think, my dear Millie, how he must have *practised* to be able to play like this !

THE S. S. (*with a shudder*). It's too awful to think of!

THE ENTH. PERSON. His playing is simply too wonderful! I like him better than little Hegmann, or even Hoffner—he's much *prettier*!



"I AM ONLY A WOMAN WITH THESE DEFENCELESS CHILDREN."

DISCRIMINATING P. Well, he has less firmness than young Hegmann, but more dash; less delicacy, perhaps, than little Hoffner, but he makes up for that in feeling; and, besides, he's their junior by several years.

A CONNOISSEUR. I assure you I've heard that "Starlight Symphony" played by all the first pianists in Europe, and not one of them—not *one*—entered into the yearning discontent, the dreamy despair, the hopeless passion, with such feeling and perfect comprehension as this little Poushkin—a child of seven and a half, Sir—marvellous!

[End of First Part; MASTER POUSHKIN skips off with evident relief, and is recalled again and again, amidst rapturous plaudits. Little MISS OTTILIE throws her flowers when no one is looking, and they fall unnoticed, under the piano, to the intense annoyance of her parent, who had counted upon a paragraph in the papers.]

THE MATRON WITH THE FAMILY (*to MALE OCCUPANTS OF STALLS*). *Might I ask you kindly to allow my daughters to take your seats for a short time? They are quite unused to standing so long . . . Thank you, so much!*

[Male occupants rise, and feeling a delicacy in reclaiming their seats remain standing for remainder of performance.]

THE ENTH. PERSON. They say little Poushkin spends the intervals in playing with his Noah's Ark and sucking sweets. Here he comes again! Look, his little cheek is quite bulged out. I shouldn't wonder if he had a bull's-eye in it. Isn't he a *duck*? Do you notice how he always sticks his little legs straight out when he comes to the *Scherzo*?

The Concert concludes by little POUSHKIN taking the lead in a trio with two full-grown performers as his foils. More recalls, general furore, subsiding, as the audience breaks up, into calmer criticism.

FIRST CAVILLER. After all, you know, I think I prefer De Pachmann. This boy took the *Allegro* rather too slow, *I thought*.

SECOND DITTO. And it's so easy to substitute single notes for octaves. I don't call it legitimate, either, for *my part*.

AN UNAPPRECIATED GENIUS. Too sickening, I call it, all this fuss about a kid! Why, I might play Mendelssohn and Chopin till I fell under the piano, and none of these people would give me a hand. *Would they?*

HIS FRIEND. Well, not unless you could get yourself up in a frock and bows.

HUMBLE FRIEND (*to WEALTHY PATRONESS*). Well, my dear, I always say just what I think, as you know, and I *do* say that your little Emmeline plays with quite as much *correctness* as this little Russian boy, and *far* more brilliancy of execution.

THE W. P. Do you really think so? Of course she has been thoroughly well taught—and, now I think of it, if you've nothing else to do to-morrow evening, you might like to come in about ten—I can't ask you to dinner, because our table is full, but—

[HUMBLE FRIEND *feels herself rewarded.*]

A PROUD MOTHER. I've been thinking of such a charming plan, if we can only manage it. I wonder if we could get this little Poushkin to come to us one evening, and play that duet from *Zampa* with our Josephine—she's *very* nearly perfect in it now.

HERR HEUMACHER SONNENSCHEIN (*to his DAUGHTER*). By this time to-morrow week there shall be one little boy, my Ottolie, with the nose out of joint.

PROFESSIONAL (*recognizing juvenile EX-PHENOMENON*). And so you are no longer playing?

EX-PHENOM. I am too big become—I can now stretch the octave.

The Cadi of the Curbstone

SCENE—*A thoroughfare near Hyde Park. Shortly before Scene opens, an ELDERLY GENTLEMAN has suddenly stopped the cab in which he has been driving, and, without offering to pay the fare, has got out and shuffled off with a handbag. The CABMAN has descended from his seat and overtaken the old gentleman, who is now perceived to be lamentably intoxicated. The usual crowd springs up from nowhere, and follows the dispute with keen and delighted interest.*

CABMAN. Look 'ere, you ain't goin' not without payin' me, you know—where's my two shillings?

THE ELDERLY GENTLEMAN (*smiling sweetly, and balancing himself on his heels against some railings*). I'm shure I dunno.

CABMAN. Well, look, can't yer? don't keep me 'ere all day—feel in yer pockets, come!

[*The OLD GENTLEMAN makes an abortive effort to find a pocket about him somewhere, and then relapses into abstraction.*

CROWD. Let 'im take 'is time, he'll pay yer right enough, if you let the man alone.

A WOMAN. Ah, pore gentleman, the best of us is took like that sometimes! [Murmurs of sympathy.]

CABMAN. I don't want no more than what's my own. 'E's rode in my keb, and I want my fare out of 'im—an' I mean 'aving it, too!

[*Here the OLD GENTLEMAN, who seems bored by the discussion, abruptly serpentes off again and is immediately overtaken and surrounded.*

THE E. G. Wha' d' ye mean? 'founded 'perrinence! Lemme 'lone
. . . 'portant bishniss!

CABMAN. Pay me my fare,—or I'll have your bag!

[*Seizes bag; the ELDERLY GENTLEMAN resisting feebly, and always smiling.*]

CROWD. Why can't yer pay the man his fare and have done with it?
There, he's feeling in his pockets—he's going to pay yer now!

[*ELDERLY GENTLEMAN dives vaguely in a pocket, and eventually produces a threepenny bit, which he tenders magnificently.*]

CABMAN. Thruppence ain't no good to me—two shillings is what I want out o' you—a florin—j'ear me?

THE E. G. (*after another dive fishes up three halfpence*). Thash all you're 'titled to—go 'way, go 'way!

CROWD (*soothingly to CABMAN*). 'E'll make it up in time—don't 'urry 'im.

CABMAN. D'ye think I kin stand 'ere cooling my 'eels, while he's payin' me a 'apn'y every 'arf 'our? I've got my living to earn same as *you* ave!

CROWD. Ah, he's right there! (*Persuasively to ELDERLY GENTLEMAN*). 'Ere Ole Guv'nor, fork out like a man.

[*The OLD GUVNOR shakes his head at them with a knowing expression.*]

CABMAN. Well, I sha'n't let go o' this 'ere bag till I *am* paid—that's all! [Here a POLICEMAN arrives on scene.]

POLICEMAN. Now, then, what's all this? Move along 'ere, all of you—don't go blocking up the thoroughfare like this! (*Scathingly.*) What are yer all lookin' at? (*The CROWD, feeling this rebuke, move away some three paces, and then linger undecidedly.*) 'Ere, Cabman, you've no right to lay 'old on that gentleman's bag—you know that as well as I do!

CABMAN (*somewhat mollified by this tribute to his legal knowledge, releases bag*). Well, *he* ain't got no right to ride in my keb, and do a guy, without paying nothink, 'as he?

POLICEMAN. All I tell *you* is—you've no right to detain his bag.

CABMAN. Let 'im pay me my legal fare, then—two shillings it is 'e owes *me*. I don't want to hinderfere with 'im, if he'll pay me.

POL. (*with a magnificent impartiality to the E. G.*) What have you got to say to that?

THE E. G. (*with a dignified wave of the hand*). Shay? Why, tha' I'm shimplly—a gerrilm'n.

POL. (*his impartiality gradually merging into official disgust*). Well, all I can say to *you* is, if you *are* one, don't abuse it . . . Where are you going to?

THE E. G. (*brimming over with happy laughter*). I dunno!

POL. (*deciding to work on his fears*). Don't you? Well, *I do*, then. I know where *you're* goin' to—ah, and where you'll *be*, too, afore you're much older—the station-'us!—(*with a slight lapse into jocularity, in concession to his audience*)—"for one night honly"—that's *your* direction, unless you look out. (*With virtuous indignation*.) 'Ere you are—calling yourself a gentleman, and old enough to know better—riding in this man's keb, and trying to bilk him out of his money. Why, you ought to be *ashamed o'* yourself!

A FUSSY ONLOOKER. Now, Policeman, why do you interfere? Why can't you leave them to settle it between them?

POL. (*turning on him with awful dignity*). I don't want no suggestion from *you*, Sir. I know *my* dooty, and them as tries to obstruck me'll get no good by it. I'm not 'ere to take one man's part more than another.

CABMAN. Well, ain't you goin' to do something now you *are* here? What's the good of a Copper if he won't 'elp a man to git his rights, eh?

[*Murmurs of sympathy from the Crowd.*]

POL. Now you mind *yourself*—that's what *you'd* better do, or *you'll* be gitting into trouble next! I've told you I can't interfere one way or the other; and—(*generally, to Crowd*)—you must pass along 'ere, please, or I shall 'ave to make yer.

CROWD (*to E. G.*). Give the man his money, can't yer pay 'im?

CABMAN. Come, look sharp! Just you pay me!

THE E. G. How c'n I pay man? P'fectly 'surd! Go to bleeshes!

[*Bolts again, and is once more overtaken by the indignant CABMAN.*]

POL. (*following up*). Now, then, Cabman, don't go hustling him!

[*Crowd's sympathy veers round to the E. G. again.*]

CABMAN. 'Oo's 'ustlin'? I ain't laid a finger on 'im. (*Magnanimously.*) I've no wish to 'inder 'im from goin' wherever he likes, so long as he pays me fust!

POL. You've no right to touch the man, nor yet his bag; so be careful, that's all I tell you!

THE E. G. (*with maudlin enthusiasm.*) Pleeshman's perfelly ri'! Pleeshman always knowsh besht! [Tries to pat POLICEMAN on back.

POL. (*his disgust reaching a climax.*) 'Ere, don't you go pawin' me about—for I won't 'ave it! If I'm right, it's more than what *you* are, anyhow! Now be off with you, wherever it is you're going to!

CABMAN (*desperate*). But look 'ere—can't you take his name and address?

POL. (*rising to the occasion.*) Ah, that's what I was waitin' for! Now you've ast me,—now I kin act! (*Pulls out a pocket-book full of dirty memoranda, and a stumpy pencil.*) Now, then, Sir, your name, if *you* please?

THE E. G. (*sleepily*). Shtupid thing a-do, but qui' forgot . . . Come out 'ithout mi' name, 'shmornin'!

POL. (*sternly*). That won't do with Me, you know. What's your name? Out with it!

THE E. G. (*evidently making a wild shot at it.*) Fergushon.

[*Smiles as if he feels sure the POLICEMAN will be pleased with a name like that.*

POL. John? George? James?—or what?

THE E. G. You can purr 'em all down t'me—it don' marrer!

POL. (*briskly*). Where do you live, Mr. Ferguson?

THE E. G. (*mechanically*). Thirty-one, Lushington Street, Gargleshbury Park.

POL. (*writing it down, and giving leaf to CABMAN.*) There, will *that* do for you?

CABMAN. That's all *I* want. (*To the E. G.*) You'll 'ear from me later on.

THE E. G. (*affectionately*). Alwaysh pleash'd shee you, any time . . . Pleeshman too . . . Shorry can't shtop—mos' 'portant bishnish!

POL. Which way do you want to go ?

THE E. G. Earish Court.

POL. Then get there, if you're capable of it. And now, you boys, clear the road, will you ?

[The ELDERLY GENTLEMAN, smiling in the full conviction of having extricated himself from a difficult situation with consummate tact and diplomacy, goes off unsteadily in the direction of Piccadilly, accompanied by a suite of small boys who have kindly resolved to see him through any further adventures that may await his progress. The CABMAN remains to discuss the affair at great length on the curbstone. The POLICEMAN paces slowly on, conscious that he has worthily maintained the dignity of his office.]

A Game of Billiards.

SCENE—*A Hotel Billiard-room—anywhere. MR. BALK and MR. FOOTLER discovered about to begin a game. CAPTAIN HAZARD and MR. SPOTTESBARDE, who have come in just too late to secure the table, seat themselves on bench, and look on. A FRIEND of MR. FOOTLER'S is smoking in the background.*

CAPT. HAZARD (*in an undertone to MR. S.*). They won't be long. We shall get a game before they close—it's only a quarter-past ten now.

MR. FOOTLER (*a weedy, limp man, with spectacles, and a mild expression*). It's ages since I've touched a cue—you ought to give me something, really.

MR. BALK (*short, stout, and self-satisfied*). All right! How much?—will seventy do?

MR. F. (*a little hurt*). Oh, I'm not so bad as all that—say twenty-five.
[Chooses a cue with great circumspection.]

MR. FOOTLER'S FRIEND. I shall put a shilling on you, Freddy, my boy—so play up!

MR. BALK. I'll break. I always make it a rule to play for safety. (*Tries to make a miss in baulk, but manages somehow to leave his ball near centre pocket.*) Ah! (*with an air of reproaching somebody else*) too hard, too hard!

MR. F. (*chalking his cue*). You've left me a chance there. Let me see—perhaps I'd better leave you where you are for the present, hit the red first, and come back to you afterwards? I think that's the better game.

CAPT. H. (*aside, to MR. S.*). Seems to think he's playing parlour croquet !

MR. F. (*after shifting the position of his left hand several times, and agitating the end of his cue, misses red ball, and lands himself eventually in corner pocket*). I've let you off, you see ! Now how the dickens did I do that, I wonder ?

MR. B. Can't say, I'm sure—that's three to me (*after playing*). Ha ! I've left 'em for you again.

MR. F. I can't do anything. . . . There, didn't I tell you so ? But I've saved my miss, anyway !

MR. B. (*walking round table*). I ought to do something here. Yes, I shall hit the red very fine, and go in off him into the left-hand top-pocket —that's the proper game (*plays*). Te-hee ! Too much side on !

CAPT. H. (*sotto voce*). He's right there !

MR. FOOTLER (*flurried*). My turn, is it ? But—er—where's my ball—eh ?

MR. BALK (*good-humouredly*). Why, you see, you got into one of the pockets, old fellow, out of my way.

MR. F. • Ha ! ha ! So I did. I—I thought it was the best thing to do. What's the game, Marker ?

MARKER. Twenty-seven. Three.

MR. F. I don't like potting my adversary's ball—but you leave me no choice. [Plays.]

MARKER. Three. Twenty-seven.

MR. BALK (*encouragingly*). Very near, very near, Sir. Well, you haven't left me much.

MR. F. (*laughing feebly*). No, I—I couldn't afford to. (MR. BALK makes an easy cannon). Oh, good shot !

MR. B. (*complacently*). Ah, I'm getting my eye in now.

[*Strikes sharply, and sends ball off the table.*]

CAPT. H. (*aside*). He'll be getting somebody's eye out presently !

MR. B. (*receiving ball*). Thanks—much obliged. (*Explanatorily to F.*) I put rather too much screw on that time.

MR. F. (*with pride*). That's another to me, Marker ! [Makes a cannon.]



"TE-HEE! TOO MUCH SIDE ON!"

MR. B. (*patronisingly*). There, you see, you can hit 'em when you take a little trouble. Not a bad stroke at all.

MR. F. (*modestly*). I'm afraid it was a bit of a fluke. Oh, I go on playing, don't I? That's two to me, Marker—(*after playing again*) . . . and another to this gentleman.

MR. B. (*plays, and makes another cannon*). I played for that. Creeping up to you, Footler, eh!

[*Later. MR. FOOTLER'S score is thirty-five—MR. BALK'S nineteen.*

MR. FOOTLER is benignly patronising; MR. BALK gloomy, and inclined to cavil.

MR. F. (*beaming with honest pleasure*). Five more to me, Marker! I hope you're keeping the score correctly?

MR. B. Well, you aren't going to tell me you tried for that! . . . Two more! Come, I say—it's impossible to play against such flukes as that—you played to go in off the red.

MR. F. Oh, n-not altogether . . . (*misses*). There, you can't say I didn't try for that!

MR. B. (*scanning the cloth*). Um—don't like this at all . . . Sha'n't score this time. (*He doesn't.*) Now you've got me! (*Gloomily.*)

[*MR. F. plays, and makes three.*

MR. B. (*disgustedly*). There, I never saw the balls run as they do for you in all my life!

MR. F. (*generously*). Well, you're not in form to-night—I can see that.

MR. B. Form! What good's form against such infernal fluking? There—*go on*—it's you to play!

MR. F. I was just looking round the table, that's all. Well, I shall have a shot at the double event . . . Oh, hard *luck*!

MR. B. (*growling*). Hard luck? Hard *stroke*, you mean! (*Plays.*) Was that a cannon, Marker?

MARKER (*imperturbably*). No, Sir—nothing, Sir.

MR. B. (*hopelessly*). It's no use—they won't run for me to-night!

MR. FOOTLER. Here, Marker, jigger, please. Is the red ball clear of the cushion?

MARKER (*inspecting it*). Good half-inch, Sir !

MR. F. Then that's *my* game. (*After playing*.) Phew ! a mile off ! You may beat me yet, old fellow.

MR. B. Not to-night. *I can't do anything*. . . . There, ever see anything like that in your life ?

CAPT. H. (*in an undertone*). I'm hanged if *I* ever did ! They ought to rent a table by the week if they want to play a game out !

MR. F. Long game this ! Tell you what, Balk, if you like to take that twenty-five back, I've no objection !

MR. F.'S FRIEND. Oh, I say—and how about my shilling ?

MR. B. (*annoyed*). Don't be too confident, Footler ; I shall catch you up yet. I play a waiting game.

CAPT. H. Jove—and so do we !

MR. B. I wouldn't make too sure of that shilling, Jones ; the game isn't over yet by a long way.

MARKER (*confidentially*). Beg pardon, Gentlemen, but it's getting late, and those other Gentlemen are waiting to play—would you mind playing fifty instead of a hundred up ? Makes a shorter game, Gentlemen.

MR. F. Well, *I'm* quite willing.

MR. B. Of course *you* are ! But I never meant to give you twenty-five in fifty—I'd give nobody such long odds as that.

MR. F. Then, look here, suppose we play fifty up, and you take twenty-five—that 'll make you forty-six to my forty-seven.

MR. B. (*brightening visibly*). That's fair enough—all right, Forty-six-forty-seven, Marker. I shall have a chance now. (*Lies on table and, in making stroke, kicks MR. F. in waistcoat*.) Conf—Footler, I shall have that stroke over again,

MR. F. (*removing to a safe distance*). I shall take good care *I* don't !

MR. B. (*after missing again*). Of course I knew I shouldn't bring a stroke like that off twice running—(*bitterly*)—you ought to run out easily, now !

MR. F. (*trembling with excitement*). Oh, I'm not so sure about that.

[*Aims jerkily*.]

JONES (*his FRIEND*). Mind what you're about, old fellow—remember I've a shilling on you !

MR. F. (*after missing*). Hang it, Jones ! I wish you'd wait for the stroke—it's enough to put any fellow out !

MR. BALK. Forty-seven all ! (*Plays.*) What was that, Marker ?

MARKER (*impassively*). Nothing, Sir ; 'nother miss, Sir.

MR. FOOTLER. I'll make it safe this time. (*Plays.*) Pah, never got near it !

MR. BALK. Now then—(*plays*)—tut-tut, not *legs* enough !

CAPT. H. (*aside*). Legs ! a centipede wouldn't have enough for *him* !

MR. FOOTLER. Forty-nine—forty-eight. This is getting devilish exciting ! (*Plays.*) Ah, too fine ! that's another to you—I *must* be careful now !

MR. BALK. Oh, *you're* all right—I sha'n't get anything to-night.

MR. FOOTLER (*amiably, as MR. B. is aiming*). Have some more chalk ?

MR. B. (*angrily*). Chalk ! what the—there, it's all your . . . wait a bit—it's not going to be a miss, anyway . . . it's—hi ! go on—go *on*, can't you ! (*Ball wavers a few seconds, and drops into pocket.*) Game to me ! (*Magnanimously.*) Well, Footler, you play a finer game than I thought you did, but I fancy I should beat you by more than this on a better table, and then you *started* twenty-five to the good, you know ! Capital exercise, billiards—the King of indoor games ! [MR. F. *puts on his coat sulkily.*

MARKER to CAPT. H. and MR. S. (*who have risen eagerly*). Very sorry, Gentlemen, close on 'alfpast eleven, Gentlemen—closing time !

MR. F. (*to MR. JONES*). Well, old fellow, if I didn't quite pull it off, you'll admit you had a good run for your money !

[MR. BALK *walks out with restored complacency.* MR. FOOTLER follows with MR. JONES in a more resigned frame of mind. The Captain and his Friend reserve their remarks until they are alone. Lights extinguished as Scene closes.]

Sunday Afternoon in Hyde Park.

SCENE.—*The Open Space between the Serpentine and Marble Arch. Demonstration in progress calling upon the Government to resign instantly. Intense heat; hot, hoarse men are to be observed gesticulating frantically from breaks; all the indignation and enthusiasm proceed from that portion of the Crowd nearest the vehicles—those at a distance are either apathetic or languidly amused. In the breaks, perspiring persons of both sexes sit beaming warm approval of the speeches. Seedy men hold up huge banners with the perfunctory air of stage supers. Bandsman sprawl on the turf, as far away from the oratory as practicable, smoking clay pipes. At no great distance from the Demonstration an ELDERLY FADDIST is expounding a new philosophy which is to regenerate Society, to a few irreverent boys and an unconvinced mongrel. Close by, a Socialist is haranguing on a stool, and a Field Preacher is delivering an extempore address, while an open-air Reciter endeavours in vain to retain an audience, which has somehow formed an impression that he is advocating the Eight Hours Labour Bill. All these various deliverances are audible at the same time, and much to the effect indicated below.*

ORATOR IN FIRST BREAK (*educated voice; carefully attired in white hat and waistcoat, frock-coat, button-hole, &c., addressing crowd of well-fed and comfortably clad CITIZENS*). Well, Gentlemen, there's one Court these precious aristocrats have all to themselves—and I wish them joy of it! (*Pauses for oratorical effect.*) I refer, Gentlemen, to the *Divorce Court*. (*Roars of virtuously derisive laughter.*) Far be it from me to contest their right to such a monopoly. We will leave them that. (*Scornful groans.*)

But, I ask you—(*he drops all playfulness and becomes sinister*) if we—the down-trodden slaves of the aristocracy—were to go to them—as they roll round this Park, revelling—(*scathingly*) ay, revelling, Gentlemen! (*Savage yells as the accuracy of this picture of high-life is recognized*)—if we were to go to them, in our destitution (*pulls out a silk handkerchief*) in our squalor (*arranges button-hole*) our poverty—our rags (*buttons coat*)—how would they receive us? Would they take us to their bosoms?

CROWD (*with conviction.*) Not *they*!

THE ORATOR (*fiercely.*) Not they, indeed! Why, Gentlemen, they would laugh—yes, laugh, *laugh* in our desperate faces! But let them take heed to themselves! (*And so forth.*)

ANOTHER ORATOR. Those among you who have access to Blue Books—(*Howls from his auditors, who imagine that this particular form of light literature is being held up for execration.*)

THIRD ORATOR (*an Irishman.*). And I'd just like to ask ye now, as liberty-loving Englishmen, how would ye feel—hwhat would ye think—hwhat would ye do—if here, in this great Metropolis, ye saw a man barbarously turned out of house and home, for no other rason in the worrlid, Gintlemen, for no other rason on this *earth*—than being unable or unwilling to pay his rent? Would ye call *that* Civilisation?

CROWD (*unanimously*). No!

THE ELDERLY FADDIST. The force that governs this world, my friends, is one which, for want of a more appropriate term, I shall venture, with your permission, to call “Detriment.” (*The Mongrel has had enough of it, and strolls off to listen to the PREACHER.*) Detriment. Two dots make a line—(*argumentatively*)—Do they not? With the second dot we know the direction, but not the value. With the *third* dot—

FIRST RUDE BOY. Ga-arn—yer dotty yerself!

THE E. F. And so with everything. All the words in our language are founded upon one or other of the primary colours. We study Nature—and what do we find? This great elementary Law; the Rule of Five, supplemented, I *ought* to say, by the no less elementary Rule of Two. Thus, the human trunk with the four limbs make five—there are five senses, five holes in the head—



"WOULD YE CALL *that* CIVILISATION?"

SECOND R. B. There's a crack in *yourn*, anyway!

THE E. F. (*ignoring this personality*). Five petals in most flowers, five points to a starfish, the average number of peas in a pod—five.

FIRST R. B. 'Ow many bloo beans mike five, eh, Mister?

[E. F. gives it up in despair.

N

FOURTH ORATOR. Depend upon it, my friends, when that iniquitous law was passed, Mr. Balfour's couch was visited by a nightly spectre—the phantom—(*lowers his voice impressively*)—the ghost, my friends—the ghost——

THE RECITER (*who is well on in "Fallen by the Way"*). “The ghost had a clean white surplice as a clergyman might ha' wore !”

[FOURTH O. finds his climax spoilt.

IRISH PATRIOT. There's nothing at ahl dishonourable in being in prison, Gintlemen. Some of the best and greatest men that ever lived have been in prison——

AN AUDITOR (*who seems to have reasons of his own for finding this argument particularly soothing*). 'Ear, 'ear !

THE I. P. Look at Gambetta !

A DULL MAN (*to NEIGHBOUR*). Wot's he a-tellin' of us to look at ? HIS NEIGHBOUR. Gambetter.

THE D. M. Gam—'oo ?

NEIGHEOUR (*curtly*). Better.

THE D. M. Better nor wot ?

NEIGHBOUR (*losing patience*). Oh, I dunno—arsk 'im !

THE PREACHER (*concluding an anecdote with the voice of a bull*). But that little bo-hoy was not *afride*, dear friends. No-oh ! That little bo-hoy was not *afride*. And *why* was that little bo-hoy not *afride*, dear friends ? Shall I tell yer ? Becos 'is father 'ad 'old of 'is 'A-and ! Har-yes ! (*&c., &c.*)

THE SOCIALIST. Don't you be led away by no words. We shall never get our rights without we shake the fist o' fizzical force in the faces of our capitalist foes !

PUNY SHOPBOY (*much impressed*). Ah, yer right there, and no mistike about it !

THE SOCIALIST. We're the honly class wuth bein' considered, feller-citizens ! It's *hus* that repperesents the hintelleck, the henergy, the ability, the morality of the nation. (*General chorus of "'Ear, 'ear !"*) The Haristocracy and the Middle Classes—well, they've got jest enough er cunningness (I won't call it hability), er *cunningness*, for to cheat us out er

Sunday Afternoon in Hyde Park. 91

wot's ours! D'yer spouse as hany o' these 'ere Parliament blokes go into politics for the good o' hothers?

AN INDIVIDUAL (*who clearly retains no illusions*). Ketch them a-doin of it!

THE S. (*triumphantly*). Hexactly—and that's jest wot yer *won't* do. Depend on it, whether they call theirselves Radicals, or Liberals, or Tories—I draw no distinctions, they're hall as bad as one another—they go into politics fur wot they kin git *hout* of it. (*CROWD murmur detestation of such sordid selfishness.*) Well, wot *you've* got ter do is—horginise, and when you har horginised, *you'll* 'ave all the power, and then—then, feller-citizens and workers, *then* yer kin vote all the Supplies yerselves, and vote them *among* yerselves!

[*Enthusiastic applause at this lofty ideal.*

ANOTHER ORATOR (*perorating from waggon*). I'm speakin' now with all 'istry vivid to my reckerlection, and I've no 'esitation whatsoever in asserting fearlessly, and without fear o' contradiction, that, of hall the abominable tyrants that hever perlooted this earth, the present Goverment (*sustained groans*)—the prsent Goverment. Har. The most Abandoned! (*He screws each epithet out of himself with a tremendous contortion.*) The most Degraded! The most Cowardly! The most Debased! The most Ber-lud-thirsty! Set. Of Sneakin' Ruffians. That hever disgraced the Title. Of so-called Yumanity!

ADMIRING BUT FAMILIAR FRIEND. Brayvo! *That's* the way to 'it 'em. Good ole Atkins!

[*Bugle sounds; Resolution put from platforms. Processions march off with bands and flying colours, well pleased with the manner in which they have spent a most enjoyable afternoon. Redistribution of Property practised in sundry directions as Scene closes in.*

At the French Play.

SCENE—*A British Theatre, on stage of which that irresistibly funny farcical comedy, "Les Vivacités d'un Vrai Lapin," with the celebrated PATATRAS in the principal rôle, is in course of representation. "Les Vivacités," though comparatively unobjectionable in its main idea, contains incidents and allusions by which British propriety would be painfully scandalised in a literally translated version, but which, in their native form, do not seem somehow to outrage the susceptibilities of the highly respectable Anglo-Saxons of both sexes and various ages who occupy all the best seats.*

ON THE STAGE. M. PATATRAS is piteously detailing the story of his domestic unhappiness to a cynical friend, interrupted by frequent merriment from the audience.

IN THE STALLS. British Matron (whose mirth is far less restrained than it would be in any other Stalls). Oh, it is really *too* funny! I'm sure I don't know what it is that makes one laugh so!

[And, to do her justice, she does not in the least, the only phrase she caught being—"Et c'est toujours comme ça!" But it is so silly not to laugh when everybody else is in fits.

BRITISH PARENT (to his DAUGHTER, whom he has brought here with a view to discover how far she has profited by that year at the Boulogne Boarding School—he himself is "a little rusty in his French"). Well, I haven't heard you laugh much yet! Thought you understood the language?

THE DAUGHTER (*hurt*). I do, Papa, I understand every word they say—only I don't always quite know what the jokes *mean*.

B. P. (*indignantly*). And this is what they call education nowadays! Ah, well, I might have spared my money, it seems.

ON THE STAGE. MLLE. MAQUILLÉE, as "Mme. Gandinois," says to Visitor, "Asseyez-vous donc, je vous prie, vous nous ferez l'amitié de diner

avec nous ce soir, n'est ce pas ?" *The Visitor.* "Comment donc—mais c'est moi au contraire qui," &c., &c.

IN THE DRESS CIRCLE. FIRST BRITON (*with a smile of subtle appreciation*). Very smartly written, this dialogue, eh?—that last bit!

[*He chuckles wickedly.*

SECOND BRITON (*who has been secretly wishing they wouldn't speak so confoundedly fast*). Full of *esprit*—full of *esprit*! We're no match for them there!

[*An aside is spoken on stage, which convulses the initiated; both Britons a little late in laughing, and resolve to watch one another's face in future—result being that before end of Second Act each darkly suspects the other of being a humbug.*

ON THE STAGE. "*L'Ami de la Maison*" to "*M. Gandinois*:" "Froide? (*Aside.*) Ah, non, par exemple!" [Roars of laughter.]

BRITISH FIANCÉE (*who is determined JOHN shall not think her dull; behind her handkerchief*). Isn't it killing?

JOHN (*who has been beginning to think her rather too lively, with a slight stiffness*). Well, some people might find it a trifle broad—but so long as you're amused—

B. F. (*in extreme confusion*). Oh, I thought this piece was all right—or I wouldn't...that's the worst of French, you never know!

[*Wishes they had gone to "Dorothy" instead.*

BETWEEN THE ACTS.

LADY IN BOX (*to her friend*). Enjoying it, dear?

THE FRIEND (*rapturously*). Oh, so much! it's perfectly delightful! (*With a sudden impulse to candour.*) You know, I didn't quite follow everything they said.

FIRST LADY. Oh, but one doesn't—you get into it by degrees, you know. You'll find yourself beginning to get more accustomed to it by the time they come to the end of the last Act—at least that's my experience.

IN THE PIT. PLAIN MAN (*to QUIET NEIGHBOUR*). Comical kind o' piece, eh? Find you manage to catch the drift of it at all?

THE Q. N. (*who has spent much of his time abroad*). Oh—yes, I—a—think so.

THE P. M. So did I, first-rate, and without knowing a single word o' French either, mind you! I manage to pick up what it's all about as I go along, and I'll lay I'm not far out. I knew at once that that old chap in the smoking-cap was put out about the way his daughter carried on—that was very good, and then his old wife, *she* came in, and there was a shindy—

THE Q. N. Oh, pardon me, but you're wrong there. The old lady was his *mother-in-law*, and the girl his young wife. He has no daughter in the piece, and the idea is—

THE P. M. Well, *I* made it out different myself, any way.

[*He evidently prefers his own interpretation, which the Q. N. does not make any further efforts to correct.*

DURING SECOND ACT.

On the Stage. Mlle. MINAUDIÈRE, as the inevitable *ingénue*. “Si je m'amuse ici! Figurez-vous que—”

[*She says something very naïve indeed, which is received with uproarious merriment.*

IN THE STALLS. YOUNG WIFE (*who is always meaning “to take up her French again,” to her husband, who has given her to understand that he is perfectly at home in the language*). But, Harry, what was there so very funny about that?

HARRY (*who has been laughing, solely to keep up his reputation*). Well, you see—it's impossible to translate these things. (*Which it is, for him.*) It's Parisian, you know—very Parisian!

CLOSE OF ACT. M. PATATRAS (*after peering through curtains*). “Aie, aie! la dame de l'ombrelle rouge! Pincé! . . . Cette porte!” (*Opens door and shuts it sharply.*) “Mme. la Baronne!” (*Opens another, same business.*) Le Général! lui aussi! ou me fourrer? Ah, sous le canapé! ” (*Starting back wildly.*) “Quoi? Ma femme—ici!”

[*Sits down heavily on a work-basket. Other characters rush on, and form tableau as Curtain falls.*

CHORUS OF ENTHUSIASTS, IN STALLS. It's all so perfectly *natural*,



"QUOI? MA FEMME! - ICI!"

isn't it? So unlike *our* noisy horseplay—*did* you notice how neatly they do all their business? and the *ensemble*! How delightfully easy he was when he kicked the butler! Yes, and wasn't he *deliciously* funny when he came down to the footlights and told us what he meant to do! So



"TRÈS ÉGAYANTE, LA PIÈCE, N'EST-CE PAS?"

"OH, PAS DU TOUT."

thoroughly artistic! I shall *never* forget him trying to hide that photograph under his waistcoat.

[*And so on.*]

IN THE UPPER BOXES. (*PORTLY GAUL, to BRITON (who is laughing industriously at everything).*) Très égayante, la pièce, n'est-ce pas?

THE BRITON (*who has a vague idea that the GAUL is apologising for being about to pass*). Par de too, Mossoo!

THE GAUL (*astonished*). Comment "pas du tout"? Et vous qui pouffez de rire!

THE BRITON. Le Buffet? c'est derrière—en dessus—I—I mean—au dehors!

THE GAUL. Ah, vous riez donc aux éclats sans avoir rien compris? Vous êtes un original, vous!

THE BRITON (*who feels that he may expose himself if he goes on much longer*). Wee, Mossoo, vous avez raisong—say sar!

[*Escapes to lobby, and hears remainder of the piece from the back of the Dress Circle.*

Two ACQUAINTANCES, meeting at Refreshment Bar.

FIRST ACQ. Wonderful actor, Patatras! How good he was in that first scene when he was explaining that about the—you remember the part I mean?

[*He doesn't mean any part in particular.*

SECOND ACQ. (*quickly*). Oh, very funny, very funny! and (*not to be outdone*), and then that scene with the—with the, bless my soul! where they—you know!

FIRST ACQ. (*who doesn't, of course*). Yes—yes; but it's all capital. By the way (*confidentially*), is there a book of the words to be got anywhere?

SECOND ACQ. Just what I've been looking out for.

DURING THIRD ACT.

THE BRITISH PARENT (*to his DAUGHTER*). What did he say *then*?

THE DAUGHTER. Oh, Papa, I can't explain *everything* they say!

B. P. You explain? I believe I know more about it than you!

THE D. (*demurely*). Then you can explain to me, Papa.

[B. P. *pretends he hasn't heard*; triumph of DAUGHTER.

AT THE CLOSE.

CRITICAL PLAYGOER (*who has understood, on an average, about one word in fifty*). I must say I was a little disappointed with the *dialogue*—nothing like so witty as I expected!

HIS FRIEND (*whose average was one in a hundred*). There were one or two good things in it, though—but, of course it's Patatras one goes to see!

At a Highland Table d'Hôte.

SCENE—*A long dinner-table, garnished with spiky plants languishing in their native pots. Visitors discovered consulting Wine-list, which they do with knitted brows for some minutes, and then order whisky and soda. German Waiters get in one another's way, and quarrel in whispers. Late comers enter, either sneakingly, as if inclined to apologise to the Head-waiter, or swaggering, as if they didn't care particularly about dining, but had just looked in. Conversation is conducted in a low and decorous tone.*

THE DIFFIDENT DINER (*to NEIGHBOUR, politely*). Might I trouble you for the—ah—Mennu ?

THE NEIGHBOUR. Eh ?

THE D. D. Would you kindly pass the—er—(*changes his mind about the pronunciation*)—May-nu ?

THE NEIGHBOUR (*blankly*). I'm not seein' ony of it aboot here.

THE D. D. I was only asking you if you could reach the—(*decides to alter it once more*)—M'noo ?

THE NEIGHBOUR. Wull I rax ye the *hwhat* ?

THE D. D. (*meekly*). The Bill of Fare, please.

THE OLD MAID (*to Elderly Bachelor*). And what have *you* been doing to-day ?

THE ELDERLY BACHELOR. Well, I took the train to Tay—Tay something or other—and on by coach through Glen—Glen—(*gives it up*)—foozle-um, to Loch—bless my soul, I shall forget my own name next!—and by the Falls of Glare?—Falls of Bower? I can't remember all the

confounded names !) and back by the Pass at the other end of the loch, y' know.

THE O. M. A charming trip ! I'm quite *longing* to do it myself !

PROVINCIAL PATERFAMILIAS (*across the table, to Friend*). Oh, yes, I've got all my youngsters here ; they like the knocking about from coach to steamer and that. I dunno that they notice the scenery much, but (*tolerantly*) it does 'em no 'arm !

A PRETTY SISTER (*to Plain Ditto*). Jenny, don't look that way—there's that man who sat next to us at Oban, don't you remember ? I don't want to have to bow to him !

THE PLAIN SISTER. Why, Florrie, I thought you rather liked him ! I'm sure you talked ever so much to him that evening.

THE PRETTY S. I know ; but I shouldn't have if I'd known he was going to turn up again in this ridiculous way.

THE GRUMBLER (*who dines early when he is at home—generally on chops*). I give you my word I've not tasted salmon, grouse, or venison, not once all the time I've been in Scotland !

A STOUT MAN (*sympathetically*). Nor have I, Sir ! That is—at the Skinflint Hotel they did give us what they were pleased to call a "Salmi of Grouse" ; but what d'ye think it was, Sir?—four backs as bare as my hand—and the rest of it rabbit !

GERMAN WAITER. Vill you dake frite fish or whide fish ?

THE GRUMBLER. Oh, whichever you like ! (*To the STOUT MAN.*) They put it down as "Whiting," and "Fillet de Sole," and all that—but it's never anything but fried 'addock all the time !

THE STOUT MAN. I'll tell you a thing that happened to me at the Haggisburgh Hotel—I asked for some marmalade at breakfast, and—you'll never guess what they brought me—*treacle*, Sir—as I'm a living man, they brought me treacle !

[*And so on ad lib.*]

THE GUSHING VISITOR. What charming *Menus*—with pictures on them, too ! And see, what's printed on the top : "A Gift to the Guest." I do call that *so nice* of them, George, don't you ?

GEORGE. I do indeed, my dear. I should feel uneasy at profitting by such reckless and almost oriental hospitality, if I was not

reassured by observing an advertisement of somebody's beef-tea on the back.

THE NEWLY-MARRIED WIFE (*to Husband*). Jack!

JACK. Well?

N. M. W. Wasn't it idiotic of me to go and leave my umbrella behind like that?

JACK (*tenderly*). Not a bit.

N. M. W. Jack, I won't have you saying I'm not idiotic when I know I was. Now say I was idiotic, like a good boy.

JACK. Sha'n't!

THE N. M. W. Then you sha'n't have any melted butter till you do!

[*Dispute lasts throughout meal, and is in danger of culminating in a serious misunderstanding, until JACK finally admits, in a very handsome manner, that perhaps she had acted rather idiotically.*]

AN IMPRESSIONABLE TOURIST (*to himself*). What a lovely girl that is next to me—how superior she seems to all these other people! No wonder she is so silent! I must speak to her, if only to hear her voice. I'll try it—she can but snub me. (*Aloud, to fair Neighbour.*) What a wonderful view you get here of—

WAITER (*suddenly interposing with dishes*). Gudlet or Hash Muddon?

[*The Divinity appears, in the business of choosing, to have forgotten that she had been addressed; the IMPRESSIONABLE TOURIST feels that the golden moment has flown for the present, and bides his time till the sweets appear, when she opens her lips for the first time.*]

THE DIVINITY (*to her Mother, a Glasgow lady*). Mammaw, aw'm sayin'—they've pit tae much shuggar in th' Semolina pudd'n!

[*The dream fades; IMPRESSIONABLE TOURIST decides to spend his evening in the Billiard Room as usual.*]



On a Trip to Staffa and Iona.

SCENE.—*Oban Pier. Deck of the "Grenadier."* Time, 7.50 A.M. EXCURSIONISTS embark, wearing the air of chilly depression or unnatural liveliness common to people who have got up too early in the morning. *The knowing ones select chairs in comfortable corners.*

THE TIMID TOURIST (*to HEARTY DITTO*). I suppose we shall not have much more motion than this anywhere to-day, Sir?

HEARTY T. Oh, *this?* This is nothing; we're shut in here, you see. When we get out of the Sound of Mull, and meet the Atlantic, we shall get shaken up a bit, and a good thing too! We don't want a *mill-pond*, eh?

THE TIMID T. (*who would much prefer a mill-pond*). No, no—of course not.

[*Considers seriously whether he cares so very much about going to Iona after all. Steamer starts. The knowing Passengers discover that they have chosen seats facing the wind, and change. Well-read TOURISTS quote the "Lord of the Isles," out of their guide-books, to people who have none. After rounding Ardmore Point, the steamer becomes decidedly lively.*

THE HEARTY T. Now for it—here it comes!—Now she catches it! There's a beauty!

[*Repeats this before and after each wave, until a silence falls upon him.*

ATTENTIVE HUSBAND (*to WIFE, who is "enjoying it immensely," but does not seem inclined to talk*). Now do notice the play of light and shade on the mountains over there, darling.

THE WIFE (*faintly*). Lovely, dear, lovely!

ATT. HUS. But you're not looking—you really oughtn't to miss this, it's magnificent! Turn round and look; it's exactly behind you.

WIFE (*with feeble irritation*). I know, dear—but I can see it *quite* well where I am, *really* I can !

NEARING STAFFA.

EXCURSIONIST (*with his hat tied round his ears by a handkerchief—to a HAUGHTY TOURIST*). Can you tell me, Mister, if that's the Dutchman's 'At over there ?

THE HAUGHTY T. Can't say, I'm sure—you'd better ask him.

AN ENTHUSIASTIC EXCURSIONIST (*in a tall hat secured under his chin with string*). To think of landing on Staffa and seeing those wonderful caves with our own eyes—it seems like a dream, Sir, a beautiful dream ! I suppose the jetty's at the *back* of the island, eh ?

WELL-INFORMED PERSON. Oh, there's no jetty—we shall be landed in boats ; and roughish landing it is, as a rule.

THE E. E. (*cooling*). Is that so ? Well, I'm not sure, after all, that one doesn't get a better idea of things by not going too near them.

THE WIFE (*who has come entirely to oblige her HUSBAND*). Oh, don't mind *me*, don't stay behind on *my* account—there's no reason why *you* shouldn't go on the island, if you want to. Only, don't ask me to come with you—because I sha'n't. I've done enough in coming as far as I have, *I* think.

HER HUSB. Yes, you stay quietly on the steamer ; that'll be the best thing for you.

THE WIFE. If you go, *I* shall go. I'm not going to be left all alone here, so don't think it ; though *why* you can't be contented to see Staffa from where you are, without going poking your nose into every hole on the island, I'm sure *I* don't know !

ON STAFFA.

In Fingal's Cave.

EXCURSIONIST *with an eye to effect*. Fine big place, you see ; but they don't make 'arf enough of it. They ought to light it up with coloured fires, ready for when we come.

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ANOTHER EXC. Did the 'Arp and Concertina come ashore, d'ye know? Because we might get them to give us a tune inside here if they have.

On the Boulders.

A YOUNG WIFE (*who has been prostrate for the greater part of the trip*). Harry, I can't go back on board that horrid steamer again. You mustn't ask me; promise me you won't!

HARRY. But, my dear love, what are we to do?

HIS WIFE. Why, *live at Staffa*. You always say you hate fashionable places and (*persuasively*) I'm sure this is nice and quiet, Harry!

ON RETURNING TO THE STEAMER.

A TOURIST *who has stayed behind* (*to a TOURIST who has gone*). Well, was it worth it? [Rather patronizingly.]

THE TOURIST *who has gone*. Oh, marvellous—grand!

[*Gives an elaborate description.*]

THE T. *who has stayed behind*. Well, I had half a mind to go myself—thing you don't see twice in a lifetime, and all that—but (*candidly*) the fact is, the ship seemed steadier, and it struck me as a good opportunity to go below and get some lunch—and a capital lunch I *had*—there was roast beef, corned beef—

[*Describes lunch vividly.*]

ON IONA.

The Tourists land, and are welcomed by a chorus of Native Children, chatting, "Shells a penni, necklace twopence, seaweed a penni, sea archid twopence." TOURISTS follow the Guide with the sheeplike submission peculiar to them; one EXCURSIONIST observes that it is "hallowed ground," to which his neighbour, without exactly knowing why, assents, and becomes depressed. Gradually, however, the modern spirit begins to assert itself in the majority.

A SCEPTICAL T. (*gazing at the Tomb of the Kings*). For anything we know, they may be all bogus, every one of them, eh? Fancy us staring solemnly, as if they were perfectly genuine—that's a good joke, that is!

FRIVOLOUS T. (*turning to the tombs of the MACLEANS*). 'Ullo, 'ere's a fine old feller with his sword be'ind 'im!

GUIDE (*long-sufferingly*). That is Maclean of Duart.

FRIV. T. (*pointing to effigy of armed Chieftain*). And is that his good lady next him?

[*Spirits of party revive; the inevitable Funny Man comes out with great success, and a little TOURIST of comic exterior who trots up breathless at every halt, and asks a serious question, is hailed with delight, and treated as a Humourist of the finest water.*

LEAVING IONA.

YOUNG LADY. Oh, do you know, it was *such* a pity! I was down in the Saloon, reading up all about Iona in the Guide-book, and I never noticed we were there till it was too late to land. Still I can say I've *seen* it, you know—can't I?

ON THE WAY HOME.

THE OFFICIOUS T. (*to a Lady, who is beginning to think she has got over the worst of it now*). You'll excuse me, Ma'am, but wouldn't you feel more comfortable if you had your chair the other way? You see, where you are is just in front of the Cook's Galley, and there's a warm smell of burnt mutton-chops coming up that—

[*The Lady moves, and—much to the surprise and indignation of the*
OFFICIOUS T.—“*does not say so much as thank you.*”

Steamer nears Oban; the Comic T. illustrates the steps of the Highland Fling, till he falls over a campstool. Small stout men, who have been invisible till now, emerge, and point out scenery. The man who plays the Concertina collects subscriptions in a saucer, being careful to weed out every copper coin as it is contributed.

FINAL VERDICT (*by a Lady who has passed the entire day on a deck-chair, with her head in a shawl*). Well, there was less to see than I expected!

At Some Highland Sports.

SCENE—*A Glen in the North. On a rock above, the nonpaying Public are perched, as a Poet present remarks, "like sea-birds." Below an enclosure surrounded by rough seats, local magnates in waggonettes and dog-carts, &c. On a platform a PIPER is seen strutting round, performing, with infinite satisfaction to himself, upon his instrument, while a Jury of three take notes solemnly in a tent. In an adjoining field a small party are playing football, with an ostentatious unconsciousness of any rival attraction, that is possibly due to some private pique. The PIPER ceases with the weird suddenness with which he began, and marches off; a RIVAL PIPER, in the dead silence that ensues, calls out: "Fery well played, LACHLAN MACKINNON!" At which MR. MACKINNON seems to be inwardly confounding his friend's impudence. Another PIPER mounts the platform, and performs apparently the same air. Other Pipers criticise, and compare notes.*

FIRST PIPER. John Macphairson played that "*Shaoil a Bhiodh*" ferry well, but he was mekking one or two slips. He went wrong here and there—he did that.

SECOND PIPER. Aye, he didna bring out the drone eno', to my thinking. Hoo d'ye play the "*Masther o' Mar o' Shean*," Kenneth Macrae?

FIRST P. Oo, ah, I must be thinking. (*After a silence.*) I begin it this way (*hums in SECOND PIPER'S ear, confidentially.*) "Dum-dee-ee-eee-ah-ee ; ah-oo, di-doo, di-de-ee." That is how I play "*The Masther*," Angus.

SECOND P. I do not tek it the same way—this is mine. (*Buzzes in FIRST PIPER'S ear.*) Dee-ee, eeee, ee-ah, a-a-ah, di-doo."

FIRST P. (*after giving the buzz careful consideration.*) Yes, that iss a good way, but I wass thinking there will be more of the music in mine.

THIRD P. At Tobbermorry I gained first prize—I do not care who hears me—though it was only the second medal I wass getting whateffer !

FOURTH P. It iss true—I was quite ashamed of the chudging myself.

THIRD P. Mirover, they told me I was to play anything but “*Gnaillibh a chéile*,” my favourite tune.

FOURTH P. It is ill chudging when the Pipers will no be playing all the sem tune.

A CHRONIC COCKNEY (*patronising one of the PIPERS.*) So you 'aven't got your great man down 'ere this time—the *Champion Piper*, you know !

PIPER (*who considers himself second to none on his instrument*). And who wass he ?

THE C. C. Why, Shamus McRannoch—they tell me he got all the medals at Inverness last year.

PIPER (*loftily*). Did Shamus play the pipes ? I wass not hearing of it ; he puts the stone, yes, a little—and the caber, he can toss the caber, too ; but I wass not effer hearing that he played the pipes.

THE C. C. D'yer know 'oo's winnin' now among you Pipers, eh ? I suppose they give the medal to the feller who kills the most old cows. Shouldn't care about being on the Jury myself, yer know. I'd rather be set down to class the tom-cats in my back-garden at 'ome.

PIPER (*politely*). You will be understanding more about the tom-cats and such things.

THE C. C. I've 'eard, though, that the sound of the bagpipes will call a dead 'Ighlander back to life—either that or the smell of whiskey—*whusky, you* call it, you know. But, between you and me now, you don't call that beastly row you make *music*, do yer—honour bright now ? (*Finds the PIPER has turned away ; the C. C. tells a friend that he has* “Just 'ad a very pleasant conversation with one of these fellers—very intelligent chap—I like going among the natives, yer know, and gettin' to understand them and that.”)

The sports proceed ; the hammer is hurled, and on one occasion causes infinite amusement to the “Sea-birds” by just missing one of the Judges.

The spectators nearest the enclosure show a less keen sense of humour. The Caber—a rough fir-trunk, twenty-one feet long—is tossed, that is, is lifted by six men, set on end, and placed in the hands of the athlete, who, after looking at it doubtfully for a time, poises it, raises it a foot or two, and runs several yards with it, after which he jerks it forward by a mighty effort so as to pitch on the thicker end, and fall over in the direction furthest from him.

A LADY SPECTATOR (*disappointedly, after a Competitor has at length succeeded in accomplishing this difficult feat*). Don't they toss it any further than that?

A NATIVE. Oh aye, Mem. I hef tossed it three hundred feet and more myself.

THE LADY. Have you, indeed—and where was that?

NATIVE (*modestly*). Over a cliff—from the top right down to the bottom.

The "Egg and Spoon race"—a contest peculiarly characteristic of the hardy North—is about to be run; the Competitors assemble in line, each dauntless youth holding a spoon in which an egg reposes.

SIMPLE LITTLE WIFE. But tell me, Alfred, what happens if one of them drops the egg?

ALFRED (*readily*). Oh, he has to sit down and eat it instantly with the spoon.

SIMPLE LITTLE W. How curious these old Highland customs are!

The Athletic part of the Sports are over by about 4.30 P.M., ana the reels and sword-dances begin. Four reels have been danced, and six sword-dances.

MRS. CAMPBELL OF LOCH GORRIE (*to MR. SENTERBORD, who, finding that it is nearly six, and there are eight more people waiting to dance the sword-dance in turn—is retreating quietly*). You really ought not to miss the Highland Fling—it comes next on the programme.

MR. SENTERBORD (*departing*). Oh, I *won't*—I'll drop in to-morrow, after the regatta.

Dancing continues ; fourteen separate sword-dances and fifteen entries for the Fling. Local Magnates, who are not compelled by their position to remain, drive off yawning, and commanding the quality of the bag-pipe playing. Magnates whose Pipers have won a medal receive congratulations suspiciously from London friends. Outside the grounds, other fine old Highland sports "Putting the Cocoa-Nut," "Glass Bottle and Steamed Egg stalking," and "Trying the Weight," are now in full swing. Highlanders "left sporting."

At a North British Hydropathic.

SCENE—*An immense Drawing-room, lighted by numerous gas-burners, and furnished on a scale of imposing splendour. It is after dinner; tea and coffee have just been served in the corridor outside, and persons of more luxurious habits have brought in their cups to sip at leisure. On settees in the centre sit middle-aged Ladies in grey, red, and white woollen shawls each politely admiring the other's work. Very young Ladies whisper and laugh in the window-seats, all about nothing, and exhibit the liveliest affection for one another. Others converse, not unconscious of the distinction, with the exceptional Young Men who have donned evening dress, and who glide about with an agreeable air of feeling perfectly at home. People who don't know anybody sit apart in chairs, perusing "The Hotels of Europe," or anything else they can get hold of, and wondering why other people are so unsociable. A stout old Lady in a corner is discoursing to a meek little old Maid, in a strong Yorkshire accent, which from time to time compels the unwilling attention of everybody in the room. The old Lady's husband endeavours in vain to catch her eye from the background, as her confidences threaten to become of an alarmingly intimate nature. In the foreground, two Visitors have just discovered a bond of sympathy in the fact that neither of them has found Scotch scenery quite what they expected.*

FIRST VISITOR (*delighted*). You weren't much impressed with the Kyles of Bute? You don't say so! Now that really is *very* curious—no more was I! Now, Loch Lomond is certainly rather pretty—(*as if he did not wish to turn its head*)—bits of it, you know. But the Trossachs—what are the Trossachs, after all?

SECOND V. Exactly. (*Feeling that this settles the Trossachs*). What

are they? And then some people tell you Glencoe's so magnificent—I went through it in a pouring rain, and all I can say is—I couldn't see anything in the place! and look at Staffa and Iona—why, to hear some people talk—

FIRST V. (*in a large-minded way*). Well, I didn't think Iona was so bad myself, I must say—

SECOND V. Ah, perhaps you're a good sailor. Now, I'm always ill on any steamer—

THE YORKSHIRE LADY (*in a slow ruminating voice*). An' so ah said to ma husband, "Ah doan't loike to cloime oop on them 'cherry boonks,' as they cahl them, it may be vara noice," ah said, "when ya git oop, but if ah was oop, ah'd hev to coom daown agéan." An' ma husband sez to me, "Doan't ya be sooch a bleethrin owd—" [Her Husband drops a book in the background.]

A YOUNG LADY WHO LIKES EXCITEMENT (*to one of the agreeable young Men in Evening Dress*). Oh, Mr. Torckler, don't they ever *do* anything here?

MR. TORCKLER. Oh, yes; I'm going to ask that lady in the blue spectacles to sing in a minute, and there's somebody in the house somewhere who will play the flute, if you go the right way to manage him.

THE Y. L. (*pettishly*). Oh, I didn't mean *that*.—I meant get *up* something.

A SOLITARY STRANGER (*seizing the opportunity of speaking to somebody*). If you're fond of climbing, there's a very nice mountain in the vicinity—you can get up it easily in three hours, and it's only eight miles by road.

THE Y. L. (*stiffly*). Oh, thank you very much. (*To MR. T.*) I mean get up a dance, charades, *anything*!

AN HABITUÉE. Ah, you should have been here the week before last, when the house was full! There was something going on every evening in the Recreation Room—theatricals, dumb-crambo, thought-reading, and I don't know *what* all—such *fun* we had!

THE Y. L. (*coldly*). Really? (*To MR. T.*) But *why* couldn't we dress up, or something? [Vaguely.]

MR. T. (*doubtfully*). Well, there's not much point in dressing-up unless you do something when you *are* dressed up, is there?

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THE Y. L. (*who would be quite satisfied with the mere dressing-up*). I suppose not. Well then, we might *dance*.

MR. T. (*who doesn't dance, but would recite if anybody were to ask him*). Not enough men.

THE Y. L. Oh, some of the girls—*by which she means the other girls*)—can dance with one another. Do propose a dance.

MR. TORCKLER (*diplomatically*). Er—well, I must find out what people think about it before proposing anything, you know. (*Circulates at as wide a radius from her as possible, while she endeavours to find out from the expression of those he addresses their willingness to dance or otherwise—an object in which she might be more successful if he were mentioning the subject at all*).

THE YORKSHIRE LADY (*as before*). An' ah went straäight hoam, an' ah poot on a moostard pleäster, bahk and front, an' next moarnin' boath ma legs wur ahl swelled oop loike—[*An agonized expression in her hearer's face warned her to lower her voice at this point*].

Another Young Man, in Evening Dress, approaches a group of Young Ladies.

ALL THE YOUNG LADIES (*coquettishly*). Now you mustn't come here, Mr. Pattle—you *are* such a dreadful tease! You must promise to behave if we let you stop. [They make room for him with alacrity.]

THE Y. M. (*taking a Novel with an elegant carelessness*). Is this *very* pathetic?

THE OWNER OF THE NOVEL. I won't have you making fun of it—it's *lovely*. I've wept *pints* over it! I left off just at the most exciting part. I'm dying to know how it goes on—I should be reading it now if I didn't want to finish this sock. [Knits calmly.]

THE Y. M. (*to VOCALISTIC YOUNG LADY*). Aren't we to have a song this evening?

THE VOC. Y. L. How can you ask me? Why, you know how I broke down last night!

THE Y. M. (*gallantly*). Well, I'd rather hear *you* break down than other people *finish*. I know that.

PROUD MOTHER (*from Provinces*). There's my daughter here will be happy to sing if you like to ask her—she's had a first-rate teaching ; and people who know what good singing *is* tell me—

THE DAUGHTER (*in modest confusion*). How *can* you go on so, Mamma ? You'll make the gentleman think I'm something wonderful ! (*She is induced to consent to sing*.) Well, what will you have ? I've got "*Only the Moon and Thee, Love !*" (*looking up under her eyelashes*)—some of my songs are rather soft—and there's "*Say but One Word, and I am Thine !*" (*archly*)—that's a hint to some of you young gentlemen ! Will you have that ? Or this is a pretty one—"One Kiss, and then—we Part !"

THE Y. M. (*prudently, after looking through her music*). I think if you wouldn't mind singing "*The Better Land*"—

[*She is disappointed, but sings it, without interrupting either the reading or the conversation.*]

THE YORKSHIRE LADY (*speaking through music*). So ah said to th' Doactor, "Doactor, ah want you to tell ma joost wheer it is ah'm sooffrin'—is it ma loongs," ah said, "or ma chest, or ma—"

THE SINGER (*with solemn feeling*). "Not there—not they-ere, my che-ild !" [Song concludes amidst faint and absent-minded applause.]

THE YOUNG LADY WHO LIKES EXCITEMENT (*to herself*). That's over, thank Goodness ! There's plenty of time for a dance still, if they only make haste. I'm sure I can hear someone playing a Waltz in the Recreation Room. What are they waiting for ? (*Two Men enter, and look around inquiringly*). Have they come in to find partners ? Then there *is* dancing ! (*The two Men bring out a chess-board, and begin to play*). . . . Pigs ! (MR. TORCKLER, *after conversing confidentially in various quarters, goes out with MR. PATTLE*.) They're going to arrange about it at last ! (*Waits hopefully for some time—the lively Young Ladies collect their work, and go out too*). Oh, those girls are going now. I'd better ask some one, perhaps. (*Crossing to MATRON*.) Do you know where those gentlemen in evening dress have gone ?

MATRON. I heard them say something about a game of billiards and a cigar.

THE Y. L. (*blankly*). Oh, (*hopefully*) but all those young ladies—where have *they* gone to ?

MATRON. The young ladies? Oh, *they've* gone to bed—we keep early hours here, you know.

THE YORKSHIRE LADY. An' he gave ma a perscreepshun, ahl fooll o' things that ah wasn't to teäk. Ah moos'n't eät brëad, an' ah moos'n't eät



"AH MOOSN'T EÄT BREÄD, AH MOOSN'T EÄT POTËATOES, NOR YET MOOFFINS, NOR TEA-CÄAK."

potëatoes, nor yet mooffins, nor tea-cäak, nor no pëastry nor swéats (*meditatively*)—boot ah niver *wur* a swéat eäter—ah niver *wur* thot! (*And so on*).

[Drawing-room gradually empties, till the YORKSHIRE LADY is left alone with the little old Maid, who throws in an automatic "Yes" at intervals, and wonders if it will be rude to say she is rather tired.

Doing Edinburgh Castle.

SCENE—*Entrance to the Castle. A small PARTY OF SIGHTSEERS have just retained the services of an OFFICIAL GUIDE.*

GUIDE (*in a mellifluous tone and without any stops whatever, fixing his eyes on vacancy, having apparently committed his discourse to memory.*) Before commencing our round of the Castle Lady and Gentlemen I will ask your attention to a few remarks upon the trench below the drawbridge where we now stand most parties are apt to run away with the erroneous impression of its being the ancient moat which a moment's reflection will show us how absurd this is being more than one 'undred feet above the base of the solid rock before us is the exercise ground formerly the scene of countless burnings 'angings and other revolting spectacles common to that barbarous age now appily for ever past from us!

FIRST SIGHTSEER (*desirous to gratify the GUIDE, and display his Military knowledge*). You could hold this place against any odds, eh? Practically impregnable, I suppose?

GUIDE (*blandly*). Well, Sir, as a fortress, it is quite obsolete, being commanded by Arthur's Seat.

A "STOOPID" S. Who did you say commands the Castle?

[*Discovers that he is cut off from GUIDE by a body of soldiers marching down to drill. By time he comes up with him again, GUIDE is already explaining something else, and question allowed to drop.*

GUIDE. Above the same-eye Gothic arch under which we are now about to pass you will observe the Scots arms carved above with the motto *Nemo me impugn laccusit* no one prevokes me with impunity.

THE STOOPID S. (*in a whisper*). *What did he say provoked him?*

GUIDE (*continuing*). In the chamber above the last and innermost gate making seven in all and lighted by a single grating it formed the place of confinement for the luckless Argyll previous to his execution there the original study was made by Ward for his picture the "*Last Sleep of Argyll*" now in the 'Ouses of Parliament.

SIGHTSEERS (*who have never seen the Westminster frescoes*). Really? painted there, was it! [They regard the grating with dawning interest.

THE S. S. Singular thing to do—sending an artist to paint him asleep before they cut his head off, curious days, those, Sir, curious days! [Morals on the past.

GUIDE. The portion above is modern having been re-erected in recent times in the latest baronial style on your left as you go forward Lady and Gentlemen you will observe a flight of steps formerly at once the route for persons of royal and noble blood and the only means of access from the condemned cells to the place of execution a striking contrast thus we see afforded between the two sides misery and splendour the highest and the lowest. (*Halts in an impressive manner. Sightseers prepare, in limp attitudes, to receive information.*) You follow the direction of my staff to the furthest corner of the ramparts where the turret projects it was there that a rather romantic—

AN OLD LADY (*arriving hurriedly*). Are you the Guide? Can you explain the Castle?

GUIDE. Yes, Ma'am, that is what I am here to do—(*placidly*)—it was there that a rather romantic but strictly—

THE OLD LADY. Wait a minute. I want my friend to hear this. I'll fetch her.

[Starts in search of friend, who is drifting aimlessly about amongst the cannon, and comes under protest.

GUIDE (*proceeding*)—a rather romantic but strictly according to our historical records a curious coincident took place the manner in which the Castle was taken by surprise by Randolph with only thirty picked men ascending the well-nigh precipitous rock the checkwatch or as we now call it the patrol was at that moment being relieved and the sentinel in mere

wantonness or pure folly seizing one of the stones with which in those days for purposes of defence the rampart was then encumbered and shouting “Away! I see ye well!” ’urled it over the rampart upon the ’elmets of the crouching escalade!

THE S. S. The crouching *which?*

GUIDE (*repeating with relish*). The crouching escalade fortunately without injury to any of the scaling-party which waiting till the check-watch had gone by clutching the ivy in their garntleted ‘ands they reached the summit overpowering the sentinel and taking the Castle by surprise the feat being counted as one of the most daring stratagems known to ’istry!

THE S. S. (*admiringly*). And were *you* there?

GUIDE. No, Sir; it took place in thirteen ’undred and *twelve*, Sir—(*impassively*)—before I was born, Sir. (*Continuing as before*.) In yonder building now the Armry the ruthless Crichton entertained the Douglases at a banquet the cover being removed revealed the black bull’s ’ed symptom of violent and immediate death struck with ’orror at the sight they begged for their lives being brutally refused and slain on the spot the iron tank on your right as you ascend is comparatively modern and constructed to ’old water in the event of a siege to provide against the garrison being reduced by thirst the water is forced up into the tank each day by gravitation from the Pentland ’Ills. I may here mention that the piece of ordnance we are now passing is the famous Mons Meg. Ladies and Gentlemen it is unnecessary for me to explain the cannon the inscriptions on the carriage being its ’istry.

THE S. S. Is that the gun they fire every day by electricity?

GUIDE. It was last fired in 1682, Sir, being burst by the discharge and consequently now obsolete, even for peaceful purposes.

[*The party pass into the quadrangle and face the Royal Apartments.*

GUIDE. The wing on your right was set apart for the Court and Royal Suite in front stands the ancient Banqueting ’All here Argyll feasted and connived with Cromwell at the death of Charles the First that doorway leads you to Queen Mary’s Room the birthplace of James the Sixth afterwards James the First of England. Ladies and Gentlemen—(*mysteriously*)—I am now going to explain something which you will find

in none of the authorised guide-books or 'istorical records will you all remain kindly where you now are for a few minutes, and keep your eye fixed on me?

[Walks slowly to a doorway, and touches a stone above it with his stick, sightseers look on, apparently in expectation of some startling conjuring trick.

GUIDE (*returning with subdued importance*). A curious discovery never yet cleared up was made some years ago in the exact spot which you saw me touch with my stick some workmen making alterations came upon a coffin of oak which being opened proved to contain the skeleton of an infant of great antiquity—

THE S. S. How old did you say the infant was?

GUIDE. Its exact age is unknown, but it was of a great antiquity and enveloped in a covering wrought with two initials, one of them an I being distinctly visible being reported to Major-General Thackery then in command of the Royal Engineers he gave orders for the skeleton to be replaced and the aperture sealed up which accordingly was done though what or 'oo the infant was it is a mystery—(*solemnly*)—probly will ever remain a mystery but that is where the infant was found and where it now is.

THE S. S. Did you say that James the First was born in there?

GUIDE. Yes, Sir, we have 'istorical record of that being so.

THE S. S. Very well (*triumphantly*)—your mystery's accounted for at once!

[Looks round to discover effect, and perceives that his theory does not seem to be generally understood, and realises for the first time that he does not understand it himself.

GUIDE (*declining to pursue the subject*). Here Ladies and Gentlemen my duties terminate you will now inspect at your leisure for there is no occasion to hurry taking your own time about it the Crown Room the Birthplace St. Margaret's Chapel Mons Meg and the view from the Castle ramparts the official charge I may here remind you is sixpence each person. Thank you, Sir, I am much obliged to you.

[Scene closes on SIGHTSEERS, trooping up staircase in varying states of contented vagueness as to what they are going to see when they get up.

At the Lord Mayor's Show.

SCENE—*The Thames Embankment. Crowd discovered, waiting for Lord Mayor's Show.*

FEMALE PLEASURE-SEEKER (*whose temper is apt to be a little uncertain on these occasions to her husband*). We ought to have started at least an hour earlier—just look at the number of people here already ! You would dawdle—and it wasn't for want of speaking to, *I'm sure* !

HER HUSBAND (*mildly*). It certainly was *not*. Only, as the Show can't possibly pass for two hours at least—

SHE. *Two hours!* Am I to stand about in this crowd all *that time* ?

HE (*with a feeble jocularity*). Unless you prefer to climb a tree.

SHE. Then, John, all I can say is, I wish I had stayed at home !
(JOHN murmurs a silent but fervent assent.)

A PRACTICAL PLEASURE-SEEKER. Now I tell you what we'll *do*, Maria—you take Weetie and keep close to me, and I'll look after Duggie, and we'll just stroll comfortably up and down till the very last minute, and drop comfortably into front places, and there we are !

PATRIOTIC P. What I like about occasions like this, is the spectacle of a thoroughly good-humoured, well-behaved British crowd—you don't see that on the *Continent*, y'know !

MORE PATRIOTIC P. (*thoughtfully*). No, that's perfectly true; and what I say is—we don't want all these police about. Trust more to the general spirit of decency and order—let the people feel they *are* trusted !

A SOCIALIST. Ah, you're right. Did you hear what one of the Orators said in the Square the other afternoon ? He told 'em Sir Charles would 'ave to be as wide awake as what he was 'imself, to prevent a Unemployed Demonstration to-day. "Let him remember," says he, "it's

in our power to do that within arf a mile of the Mansion House, which would make the 'ole civilized world ring with 'orror," he says. And it's men like that as they're trying to silence and intimerdate !

THE P.P.'S (*edging away a little nervously, to one another*). Well, I hope the Police are keeping a sharp look-out. I—I don't seem to see so many about as usual, eh ?

A SPECULATOR (*with two tubs and a board*) to FEMALE P. 'Ere you are, lydy, hony two shellin' fur a fust-rate stand—you won't see no better if you was to pay a suvring !

FEMALE P. You may say what you *like*, but I'm not going to tramp about any longer, and if you're so mean as to grudge two shillings—why, I can pay for myself!

HUSB. Oh, hang it—get up if you want to !

THE PRACTICAL P. Well, Maria, it's no use worrying *now*—we must go and ask at the Police-Stations afterwards—it was a mistake to bring them !

THE PATRIOTIC P. Of course one is *told* there's a good deal of rough horse-play on these occasions, but anything more entirely—

[*A "larrikin" comes up behind and "bashes" his hat in; a string of playful youths seize each other by the waist and rush in single file through crowd upsetting everybody in their way: both the PATRIOTIC PLEASURE-SEEKERS go home by the Underground, without waiting for the Procession.*

THE FEMALE P. (*on the stand*). John, I'm sure this board isn't safe. We should see ever so much better on one of those carts—they're only asking sixpence, John. You *are* the worst person to come out with—you never give yourself the smallest trouble—I have to do it all ! You can stop here if you choose, I'm going to get into one of those carts !

[*She and JOHN descend, and mount upon a coal-cart which is being driven slowly along the route.*

Later; Procession approaching, distant music.

CROWD (*jumping up and down like "skip-jacks" to see better*). 'Ere they are, they're coming !

[*The way is cleared by trotting mounted constables.*

STOUT LADY. Well, if I wanted to faint ever so, I couldn't now—where are you, my dear?

ANOTHER STOUT LADY (*cheerfully*). I'm all right, Mrs. Porter, Mum. I've got tight 'old of this nice young Perliceman's belt—don't you fret yourself about me!

EXPERIENCED SIGHTSEER (*catching hold of little DUGGIE and placing him in front, then pushing forward*). Make room for this little boy, please—I want him to see.

[*Crowd good-naturedly make way, affording unimpeded view of procession to DUGGIE and the EXPERIENCED SIGHTSEER, who troubles himself no further.*]

A SUPERIOR SIGHTSEER. To think of the traffic of the first city of the world being stopped for this contemptible tomfoolery!

[*Fights hard for a front place.*]

Procession passing.

IMPERTINENT FEMALE (*to gorgeous Coachman*). 'Ow you 'ave altered!

WELL-INFORMED PERSON (*pointing out City Marshal*). That's Sir Charles Warren, that is!

UNEMPLOYED (*smarting with sense of recent wrongs*). Yah, toirant!

[*The C. M. beams with gratification.*]

Open carriages pass, containing Aldermen in tall hats and fur-coats.

CRITICAL CROWD. Brush yer 'ats! There's a nose! Oh, ain't he bin 'avin' a go at the sherry afore he started, neither! 'Ere comes old "Sir Ben"—that's 'im in the white pot 'at!

[*They cheer SIR BEN, without, however, any clear notion why.*]

Allegorical Cars pass.

CROWD. Don't they look chilly up there! 'Old on to your globe, Sir! Don't ketch cold in them tights, Miss! They've run up agin somethink, that lot 'ave. See where it's all bent in—eh?

Lord Mayor's Coach passes.

CROWD. 'Ooray ! That's 'im with the muff on. No, it ain't, yer soft 'ed ! It's 'im in the feathered 'at a-layin' back. Whoy don't yer let 'im sit on yer lap, Guv'nor ? &c., &c.

A block. Lady Mayoress's Coach stopping.

CROWD. There's dresses ! They must ha' cost a tidy penny !

AGITATOR. Wrung out of the pockets of the pore working man ! *I'd* dress 'em, I would ! Why should sech as you and me keep the likes o' them in laziness ? If we had our rights, it's *us* 'ud be riding in their places !

ARTISAN (*after a glance at him*). Dunno as the Show'd be much the prettier to look at for *that*, mate.

After the Procession.

PRACTICAL PLEASURE-SEEKER (*who has been pushed into a back row, and seen nothing but the banners, to DUGGIE and WEETIE, miraculously recovered*). Thank Heaven, they're found ! Children, let this be a lesson to you in future never to —— What ? Seen the Show beautifully, have you ? (*Boiling over.*) Oh, very well—wait tell I get you home !

THE FEMALE P. Now, don't say another word, John,—anyone but an *idiot* would have *known* that the cart would be turned down a back-street ! If I hadn't *insisted* on getting out when I did, we should have missed the Show altogether. Policeman, is the Show ever coming ? Shall we get a good view from here ?

POLICEMAN. Capital view, Mum—if you don't mind waiting till next November !

[*Tableau. Curtain.*

In an Italian Restaurant.

SCENE—*An Italian Restaurant—anywhere in the Metropolis. Only a few of the small dining-tables are occupied as Scene opens. Near the buffet is a small lift communicating with the kitchen, and by the lift a speaking-tube.*

Enter an ADORER with his ADORED ; he leads the way down the centre of the room, flushed and jubilant—he has not been long engaged, and this is the very first time he has dined with Her like this.

ADORER (*beaming*). Where would you like to sit, Pussy ?

PUSSY (*A fine young woman—but past the kitten stage*). Oh, it's all the same to me !

ADORER (*catching an aggrieved note in her tone*). Why, you don't really think I'd have kept you waiting if I could help it ? There's always extra work on Foreign Post nights ! (PUSSY turns away and arranges hat before mirror.) Waiter ! (*A Waiter who has been reading the "Globe" in the corner, presents himself with Menu*.) What shall we have to begin with, eh, Pussy ?

[*The WAITER, conceiving himself appealed to, disclaims the responsibility with a shrug, and privately reflects that these stiff Englishmen can be strangely familiar at times.*

PUSSY. Oh, I don't feel as if I cared much about anything—now.

ADORER. Well, I've ordered Vermicelli Soup, and Sole au gratin. Now, you must try and think what you'd like to follow. (*Tentatively*.) A Cutlet ?

PUSSY (*with infinite contempt for such want of originality*). A Cutlet—the idea !

ADORER (*abashed*). I thought perhaps—but look down the list (*PUSSY glances down it with eyes which she tries to render uninterested*). “*Vol au vent à l’Herbalaiste*,—that looks as if it would be rather good. Shall we try that?

PUSSY. You may if you like—I sha’n’t touch it myself.

ADORER. Well, look here, then, “*Rognons sautés Venezienne*,”—Kidneys, you know—you like kidneys.

PUSSY (*icily*). Do I? I was not aware of it.

ADORER. Come—it’s for you to say. (*Reads from list*) “*Château-briand Bordelaise*,” “Jugged Hare and Jelly,” “Salmi of Partridge.” (*PUSSY, who is still suffering from offended dignity, repudiates all these suggestions with scorn and contumely*.) Don’t like any of them? Well, (*helplessly*) can’t you think of anything you would like?

PUSSY. Nothing—except—(*with decision*)—a Cutlet.

ADORER (*relieved by this condescension*). The very thing! (*Tenderly*.) We will both have cutlets.

WAITER (*who has been waiting in dignified submission*). Two Porzion Cutlet, verri well—enni Pottidoes?

PUSSY (*sharply*). Potted what?

ADORER (*to WAITER*). Yes. (*To PUSSY, aside in same breath*.) Potatoes, darling. (*The WAITER suspects he is being trifled with*.) Do you prefer them *sautés*, fried, or in chips,—or what?

PUSSY (*with the lofty indifference of an ethereal nature*). I’m sure I don’t care how they’re done!

ADORER. Then Potato-chips, Waiter.

PUSSY (*as WAITER departs*). Not for me—I’ll have mine *sautés*!

ADORER (*when they are alone, leaning across table*). I’ve been looking forward to this all day!

PUSSY (*unsympathetically*). Didn’t you have any lunch then?

ADORER. I don’t mean to the dinner—but to having you to talk with, quite alone by our two selves.

PUSSY (*who has her dignity to consider*). Oh, I daresay. I wish you’d do something for me, Joshua.

ADORER (*fervently*). Only tell me what it is, darling!

PUSSY. It's only to get me the *Graphic*—I'm sure that gentleman over there has done with it.

[*The ADORER fetches it with a lengthening face ; PUSSY retires behind the "Graphic," leaving him outside in solitude. At length he asserts himself by fetching "Punch," (which he happens to have seen) from an adjoining table. A Bachelor dining alone and unloved on the opposite side of the room, watches them with growing sense of consolation.*]

AT THE SPEAKING-TUBE.

WAITER. Una voce poco fa maccaroni ! (*At least, it sounds something like this.*) A little cupboard arrives by the lift containing a dish which the WAITER hastens to receive. The new arrival is apparently of a disappointing nature,—he returns it indignantly, and rushes back to tube.) La ci darem la mano curri rabbitto Gorgonzola !

A VOICE (*from bottom of lift—argumentatively*). Batti, batti ; la donna é mobile risotto Milanaise.

WAITER (*losing his temper*). Altro ! Sul campo della gloria vermicelli !

THE VOICE (*ironically*). Parlatele d'amor o cari fior mulligatawni ?

WAITER (*scathingly*). Salve dimora casta e pura entrecote sauce piquante crème à l'orange cotelettes pommes sautés basta-presto !

[*Corks up tube with the air of a man who has had the best of it.*

AT ANOTHER TABLE.

Two Brothers are seated here, who may be distinguished for the purposes of dialogue as the GOOD BROTHER and the BAD BROTHER respectively. The GOOD B. appears (somewhat against his will) to be acting as host, though he restricts his own refreshment to an orange, which he eats with an air of severe reproof. The BAD B., who has a shifty, sullen look and a sodden appearance generally, is devouring cold meat with the intense solemnity of a person conscious of being more than three parts drunk. Both attempt to give their remarks an ordinary conversational tone.



"ALTRO! SUL CAMPO DELLA GLORIA VERMICELLI!"

THE BAD B. (*suddenly, with his mouth full*). Will you lend me five shillings?

THE GOOD B. No, I won't. I see no reason why I should.

THE B. B. (*in a low passionate voice*). Will you lend me five shillings?

THE G. B. (*endeavouring to maintain a virtuous calm*). I don't *think* I will.

B. B. You've been giving money away all the afternoon to people after I asked you for some.

G. B. (*roused*). I was *not*. It's dashed impertinence of you to say such a thing as that. I'm sick of this dashed nonsense—sick and tired of it! If I hadn't some principle left still, I should have gone to the East long ago!

B. B. I'm glad you didn't. I want five shillings.

G. B. Want five shillings! You keep on saying that, and never say what you want it *for*. You must have some object. Do you want it to go and get drunk on?

B. B. (*with a beery persistence*). Lend me five shillings.

G. B. (*reflectively*). I don't intend to.

B. B. (*in a tone of compromise*). Then lend me a sovereign.

G. B. (*changing the subject with a chilling hospitality*). Would you like anything after that beef?

B. B. (*doggedly*). I should like five shillings.

G. B. (*irrelevantly*). Look here! I at *once* admit that you've got more brain than I have.

B. B. (*handsomely*). Not at all—it's you that have got more brain than me.

G. B. (*rejecting this overture suspiciously*). I've more principle at any rate, and, to tell you the truth, I'm not going to put up with this dashed impertinent treatment any longer!

B. B. You're not, eh? Then lend me five shillings.

G. B. (*desperately*). Here, Waiter—bill. I pay for this gentleman.

WAITER (*after adding up the items*). One and four, if you please.

[*The G. B. pays.*

B. B. And dashed cheap too!

[*A small Cook-boy in white comes up to WAITER and whispers.*

WAITER. Ze boy say zat gentilman (*pointing to B. B.*) tell him to give twopence for him to ze Cook.

G. B. (*austereley*). I have nothing to do with that—he must settle it with him.

B. B. (*with fierce indignation*). It's a lie! I gave the boy the money. It was a penny!

WAITER (*impassively*). Ze boy say you did not give nosing.

B. B. (*to G. B.*) Be d—d! Don't you pay it—it's a rascally imposition! See, *Garcon*, I'll tell you in French. *J'ai donné l'homme, le chef, doo soo* (*holding up two fingers*) *pour lui-même à servir*.

G. B. I'm sorry to have to say it—but I don't believe your story.

[*To the B. B.*

B. B. (*rising*). I'm going to have it out with Cook. (*Lurches up to door leading to kitchen and exit. Sounds of altercation below. Re-enter B. B. pursued by VOICE. B. B. turning at door.*) What did you say?

VOICE. I say you are dronken Ingelis pig, *cochon, va!*

B. B. Well,—it's just as well you didn't say any more. (*Goes up to WAITER, confidentially.*) That man down there was mos' insultin'—mos' insultin'. But, there, I'll give *you* the penny—there it is. (*Presses that coin into WAITER'S hand and closes his fingers over it.*) Put it into your pocket, quick—say no more 'bout it, *Goo' ni!* Only—remember (*pausing on threshold à la Charles the First*) if any one wantsh row—(*with recollection of Duke's motto*)—I'm here! That'sh all. (*To G. B.*) I shall say *goo' ni'* to *you* outside. [Exit B. B., unsteadily.

THE G. B. (*solemnly to WAITER*). I tell you what it is—I'm ashamed of him. There, I am. I'm ashamed of him!

[*He stalks after his Brother; sounds of renewed argument without, as scene closes in.*

Choosing Christmas Cards.

SCENE—*A Linendraper's*. Large boxes full of cards occupy the counters; behind them are flushed young women, more or less short of temper; double row of undecided customers.

Enter the CONSCIENTIOUS PURCHASER with SYCOPHANTIC COMPANION.
This is a cheap place to go to—you only pay twopence three-farthings here for a card they'd ask as much as threepence for at some shops!

S. C. (*with enthusiasm*). How *very* nice, dear !

C. P. Now let me see—have you got the list ? I always like to make sure that all my cards have something appropriate about them.

S. C. But then you have such wonderful taste, dear !

C. P. (*modestly*.) I take a little pains over it—that's all. We'll begin at this tray, shall we, and work round ? Would you send one to the Skympers—or not ? I see I've put them down—but really, it's so long since they asked us to dinner. Well, I can settle that afterwards, can't I ? Just tell me when you come across anything you like, and put it aside.

S. C. Don't you like this, Sophia, isn't it perfect ?

C. P. A little commonplace, *I think*.

S. C. Yes, perhaps it is, but rather a striking kind of commonplace in its way, don't you think ? No ? Well, perhaps you're right, dear !

A SIMPLE-MINDED OLD GENTLEMAN (*to BLAND SHOPMAN*). Look here, I want a card to send to a little girl.

B. S. Certainly, Sir ! Now, here's a card we're selling a good many of—"Ye Festive Skeletons," in two subjects—represented as eating plum-pudding, and playing blind-man's buff, you see. The pair for sixpence three-farthings, Sir.

S. O. G. (*doubtfully*). Um, haven't you got anything livelier?

B. S. (*surprised*). Livelier, Sir? Those are considered very lively, this year, I assure you.

S. O. G. Don't seem to me quite suitable for a child.

B. S. (*tolerantly*). Think not, Sir? Do you like this? Churchyard and ruined tower, with moonlight effect—we find that a popular design.

S. O. G. No, no. Haven't you got something more—more Christmassy? Robins, holly,—that kind of thing?

B. S. (*with pity*). Oh, *dear* no, Sir! You won't find that class of article at any *respectable* shop!

C. P. I want something for Mrs. Charterhouse Green. Not a wassail-bowl, my dear! She only came out of that Retreat Place last Friday!

OVERWORKED SHOPLADY (*to ASSISTANT*). What are we doing those angels playing the 'arp at?

ASSISTANT. Twopence three-farthings; sixpence the set of three. But we're sold out of angels.

O. S. Well, give me some of those cats with fiddles, will you?

C. P. Now, tell me, *would* dear Tibbie think I meant anything personal if I send her a cat? It won't do to send Florrie Crackendelft Darby and Joan by the fireside, if it's true he's filed a petition, will it? I think, on the whole, a snow-scene will be safer.

A VAGUE PURCHASER. Oh, I want one of those new Art cards—those with a kind of little—well, not a sketch exactly, but—dear me, I could explain what I mean exactly, if you were to let me see one. It's *too* provoking I can't think of it! Not in the *least* like that! It's published by those people who brought out so many of the same last year. (*To a Friend*) If it wasn't a linendraper's, they'd know *directly*!

A MEEK HOUSEMAID. If you please, have you a penny one with two clasped 'ands?

B. S. Not at this time of year. They don't come in season till February, clasped 'ands don't.

SIMPLE-MINDED OLD GENT. (*leaving shop with purchase*). I'm not

altogether sure, even now, that a photograph of two stuffed toads kissing under the mistletoe is *exactly* the sort of thing to please a child as young as little Elfie !



"OH, dear NO, SIR ! YOU WON'T FIND THAT CLASS OF ARTICLE AT ANY *respectable* SHOP !"

C. P. And you've got me envelopes to fit them all ? *Very* well. How much did you say ? Five-and-tenpence threefarthings ! Oh, then I must find some others not quite so expensive. No, I won't take any I chose

Choosing Christmas Cards.

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first, thank you ! Let me see. Yes, you may pick me out a dozen from this penny tray. It doesn't matter which ! (*To Companion.*) Saves so much trouble, doesn't it ?

S. C. *Much* the most sensible way of doing it, dear. I should never have thought of it myself ; but you are so full of clever ideas ! I'm sure you must feel this a great tax upon you.

C. P. I don't mind a little trouble for my friends. They like to be remembered so !

THE PRUDENT FIANCÉ. Must send Maria something, I suppose ! That's a pretty thing now—Eh, hand-painted on china, is it ? Only five shillings ? Ah, what was that again I saw in the window—the sole of a slipper with something about "hard times" on it ? Only a penny ? You may put me up one of those. (*To himself.*) A girl likes something that makes her laugh.

A NICE CHILD. I've bought all mine, such beauties ! I got Grandma a card with a purse full of sovereigns on it, because she forgot to send us anything last year, you know—and such a funny fat pig for Tommy, he always eats too much on Christmas Day. Oh, and two turtle-doves for Papa ; he hasn't spoken a word to Mummy, except naughty ones, for two days—fancy ! And a picture of five playing-cards for that Mr. Redflush, that, Papa says, can't get any one at the Club to play with him, and a horrid one for Jessie—because she sent me one with a monkey on it, before, and a lovely one for *you*, Aunt Mary, if you don't mind it being not *quite* clean ! You shall see them all if we happen to stop at a confectioner's going home. Do you think we shall, Auntie dear, *do* you ?

OVERWORKED SHOPLADY (*to ASSISTANT.*) I say !

A. Well, what ?

O. S. You remember that party with the 'andbag, at my tray ? that chose the tipsy owls, the set of complimentary cards with gilt bats, and the row of sparrers on tillygraph wires ?

A. Her that took such a time and spoke so pleasant over it ? Yes.

O. S. She could afford to speak pleasant—went away and never paid me for one of 'em !

A. Well, I wouldn't stand in your shoes for something when the accounts are gone through !

A MILD MAN. Can you tell me how much this one is ?

O. S. (*tartly*). Aren't they marked on the back ? No ! Sixpence three-farthings, then.

M. M. Are you quite sure ? I took it out of a *threepenny* tray !

O. S. (*more tartly*). Then it had no business there, that's all ! Any one might tell *that* wasn't a threepenny card, *I* should ha' thought !

M. M. I'll take four, if you please.

O. S. (*watching him out*). If I only get one or two more of his sort, I'd soon make it up !

A FEEBLE CUSTOMER (*plaintively*). I put all my cards down in this corner, and now they've all got mixed, and I don't know which are mine, and which are somebody else's !

A PERT YOUNG WOMAN. I want a card of small shirt buttons, half-a-yard of narrer tape, and two packets of egg-eyed sharps.

BLAND SHOPMAN. Oh, we can't attend to you now—look in another evening.

P. Y. W. (*scathingly*). I'll see if they've got 'em at the Stationer's !

[*Scene closes in*

At the Pantomime.

IN THE STALLS.

FIRST PATERFAMILIAS (*to SECOND DITTO, apologetically*). Oh, I don't suppose I set foot in a theatre once in two years, in a general way. I shouldn't be here *now*, if it hadn't been that—but I thought *you* never went at all?

SECOND P. Not to regular theatres—no; I consider their influence—ah—pernicious in many ways. I think it's almost a duty not to encourage such entertainments as—well, burlesques, and music-halls, and ballets, and so on. But there's no harm in a Pantomime.

FIRST P. No, of course not. So *I* say. Got up to please the children.

SECOND P. That's all. Your family here?

FIRST P. (*a little confused*). Well—no; fact is, I was just passing the doors, and—and I'd nothing particular to do this afternoon, and so—and so—Where are *your* chicks, eh?

SECOND P. (*with some embarrassment*). Er—at home. I thought, before bringing 'em, I'd better see for myself whether there was anything unfit for children to see, y'know, and being in the neighbourhood, why—

[They quite understand one another.]

The Pantomime proceeds. Each Paterfamilias positively cries with laughter at the comic parts, and then remarks apologetically to the other, "Well, really, it's such ridiculous rubbish, you can't help smiling at it!" The wonderful groupings and processions of the Ladies of the Ballet rouse them to enthusiasm, and they thoroughly appreciate the popular songs and

jest introduced by the principal performers. As they leave they say, "After all, I suppose you ought to be young to really enjoy this sort of thing!"

IN THE BOXES.

UNSOPHISTICATED SMALL CHILD (*in much concern*). Mother, is the Donkey *really* angry with the Queen?

KINDLY UNCLE (*to prim little niece*). Well, Ada, *enjoying* it, eh?

ADA. As much as I ever *do* enjoy a Pantomime now, Uncle, thank you.

UNCLE (*rather crushed*). Ha! and Alick, what's your opinion of the fairies, now?

ALICK. I don't quite see what *use* they are—but they don't dance badly. How much do you suppose they get a week for it, Uncle?

[*The UNCLE resolves to go alone next year.*

IN THE DRESS CIRCLE.

OLD-FASHIONED PERSON (*astounded at question of highly intelligent SMALL BOY*). "Why does the Cat tell him to bathe?" Why, do you mean to say you don't know the story of "Puss in Boots"?

THE SMALL BOY. No. It's no use swotting up that sort of thing—they never set it in *Exams.* you know!

IN THE PIT.

THE PLEASED PITTITE. Look at them windmills—all going round, you see, however they can *do* it all beats me!

THE ALERT PITTITE (*on the look out for topical allusions*). See the old man trying to get on the donkey? That's a skit on Buffalo Bill, that is!

A CHARACTER ON THE STAGE. "No. We won't fight, we'll show ourselves at the Aquarium—that pays better than *fighting!*"

